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A DECAD of

CAVEATS

TO THE

People of England,

OF

General Uſe in All Times, but moſt ſeaſonable in Theſe.

As having

- A Tendency to the ſatisfying ſuch as are not content with the Preſent Government, as it is by Law eſtabliſh'd.
- An Aptitude to the Setling the Minds of ſuch as are but Seekers and Erraticks in Religion.
- An Aim at the Uniting of our Proteſtant-Diſſenters in Church and State.

WHEREBY

The worſt of All Conſpiracies lately rais'd againſt *Both*, may be made the *greateſt Bleſſing*, which could have happen'd to *either* of them.

To which is added an APPENDIX

In order to the Conviction of thoſe Three Enemies to the Deity: The *Atheiſt*, The *Infidel*, and The *Setter up of Science* to the Prejudice of *Religion*.

By *THOMAS PIERCE* D.D. Domeſtick Chaplain to His Majeſty, and Dean of *Sarum*.

Partim Juſſu, partim Permiſſu Superiorum.

LONDON,
Printed for *Richard Davis* Bookſeller in *Oxford*. 1679.

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The AUTHOR's PARÆNESIS TO THE READER,

Touching his

PRINCIPAL DESIGN

In the following

CAVEATS.

Christian Reader,

BEing passionately desirous (as by my Calling I am bound, and so with every man's Pardon I am allow'd,) to do as much as in me lies for *the converting of a Sinner from the Error of his way, whereby to save a Soul from Death, and cover a Multitude of Sins*, I pen'd

the following Diſcourſes as well for private as publick Uſe. For the private uſe firſt of ſome in the world whom they have ſatisfied, and (by the Bleſſing of God) have had a good effect on. For the more publick uſe next of many Noble and Learned Auditors, whoſe Judgments as well as Qualities being ſuperiour to mine own, have induced me to permit them to paſs from the Pulpit to the Preſs, as conceiving that by their being in common uſe, they would be alſo more commonly and truly uſefull. What ſucceſs they may find, God onely knows, who alone can command it, as He ſees fit. But I am conſcious to my ſelf of none other than the ſincereſt and pureſt Aims, at the Glory of God, and the Good of Men, from the beginning to the end of my whole Performance.

If

If in the Conduct of my Diſcourſes I ſhall ſeem to ſome Readers to have been in ſome places too ſharp, or pungent, I have This at leaſt to ſay in my Juſtification, or Excuſe, that the ſole End and Motive of my ſevereſt Argumentations, has been onely to *compel* them to be as happy as my ſelf, in the Communion I injoy with the Church of *England*. As God himſelf is expreſſed, by way of Parable, to ſend his Servant into *the High ways and Hedges, to call the poor, the maim'd, the halt, and the blind, and compell them to come in* (to his heavenly Feaſt,) *that his Houſe may be full*; ſo I am earneſt (if I am able) to drive Diſſenters out of their *Hedges* and *High-ways of Schiſm* and *Diſobedience*, into the True *Houſe of God*, and the *Lord*'s own *Table*. The whole Deſign of my *ſharpneſs*, either in *Argument*, Luk. 14. 23.

or *Expreſſion*, is by *Reaſon*, and *Scripture*, and by *Scriptural Examples* and *Comminations*, to force our ſeparating Brethren into *Unity*, and *Embraces*, and *Friendſhip* with us. God is my Witneſs, I look upon them with Bowels of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, (not with Hatred, or Contempt,) as *Poor*, and *Maim'd*, and *Halt*, and *Blind*; as lying in *Hedges* of Aberration, and in the *High-ways* of *Corah*, which lead directly both to Temporal, and into the danger of Endleſs Ruin: And I would (if it were poſſible) ἀναγκάζειν εἰσελθεῖν, even *compel them to come in*, and partake with us equally of That *Cœleſtial* Entertainment we commonly call *The Lord's Supper*; that ſo as well The Lord's *Houſe*, as the Lord's *Table* may be full of them. We abominate nothing more than ſuch an uncharitable Monopolizing both of Salvation

Salvation and the means of it, as Some (we read) have been guilty *of*; and do love *Them* ſo heartily who do as heartily hate *Us* and our *Way of Worſhip*, that if it were in our choiſe and power, we would not ingroſs the rich Reward of *orderly Walking* unto *our ſelves*, but would make them partakers together with us. We would not *Pray*, or hear *Sermons*, or communicate in *Sacraments*, or might we have our moſt ardent *Wiſhes*, we would not *go to Heaven* without them. And it is with *This* Charity that I indeavour in one Diſcourſe to prove our *Separatiſts* have *None*, ſo long as they *abide* in their State of *Schiſm*.

I know there is a great Difference, betwixt the *Weaker*, and *Wilfuller* ſort of Diſſenters. Some of the former do not *know*, and *None* of them probably

bably do *conſider*, how the *Phariſees* had their *Name* from their *Separation*, which aroſe from their Opinion that they were *Better than other Men.* Much leſs yet do they *imagine*, by what ſort of Men they are *inviſibly overacted.* They little think that they are *Journeymen* to their own vvorſt *Enemies* of each Extreme, vvho *drive a Trade* of Diviſions in Church and State, vvhereby to ſacrifice to the Luſt of *Revenge*, or *Avarice*; and that They vvho do not *intend* the very *leaſt* publick Miſchief by their Diſſentions, do (before They are aware) carry on *Their* Deſigns who intend the *greateſt.* Now there is nothing more *diſhonorable* to the *Nature* of Man, or more to the *ſhame* of his *Underſtanding*, than to be made another Man's *Property*, another Man's *Inſtrument*, or *Tool*, even without his own

Know-

Knowledge, and againſt his own *Will*, as well as *Intereſt*. And if by any thing I have urged in the Diſcourſes of this Book, Perſons *abus'd* and *over-reach'd* by men *ingeniouſly wicked* (as *Innocent Eve* by the *cunning Serpent*,) ſhall be made ſenſible of their *Wrongs*, and as well of their private as publick *Dangers*; I ſhall eſteem it a great *Reward* to have been *ſerviceable* to the more *Tender* and the more *Treatable* Diſſenters, though I ſuſtain the *Ill-will* of the more *Obdurate*.

If any Reader ſhall Object, (after his peruſal of All that follows,) that I have ſhew'd as much Severity to certain *Jeſuited Proteſtants*, as to the *Jeſuites themſelves* of the Church of *Rome*, and in one place have parallel'd the Diſmal 30 of *January* 1648. with the 5 of *November* 1605, my Anſwer is at

hand, and 'tis plainly this: that the Keeping out of Popery, with all its Plots and Conſpiracies of every kind, ſtands not ſo much in a *Diſcovery* and *Confutation* of its *Errors*, (though That has evermore been done, and is ſtill in doing,) as in an effectual *Diſappointment* and *defeating* of its *Deſigns*. The great and *general Deſign* of the Popiſh Factioners and Factors, (I mean the *Jeſuits* moſt eſpecially,) is to *debilitate* by *dividing*, and to *diſtract* by *diſcontenting* the People of *England*; and by That Artifice, (having found by long Experience, They cannot well hurt us without our Help,) to make the Proteſtants Themſelves who would have Popery *kept out* with Both their Hands, moſt Inſtrumental to *bring it in* by Head and Shoulders. All I ſay againſt the Practices of our * *Jeſuited Proteſtants*, is in

* *Habemus enim & Nos Jeſuitas, inquiebat Rex Jacobus.* Iſaaco Cauſabono *dicuntur* Οἱ ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέροις Ἰησουΐζοντες. *Epiſt.* 116.

in Diſpleaſure to The *Jeſuits*, who *drive them on.* And were I to labour for my life againſt the Inroads or Growths of *Popery*, and in prevention of the Conſpiracies which come from *Rome*, I would make it my whole Indeavour, both by Menaces, and Perſwaſions, by Terrors, and Intreaties, by ſenſe of Intereſt, and Honour, and Shame it ſelf, by all the Means I could uſe, and all the Arguments I could urge, to convince and convert our Engliſh Proteſtant Diſſenters, and make them *All* meet *as One* in the Church of *England.* If 'tis *Their* Maſter-piece to *divide* us, it ſhould be *Ours* to be *united.* And *Now*, if *Ever.* Elſe in vain do we ſtrive to confute their *Errors*, though we do it never ſo well, whilſt torn in pieces among our ſelves we commit the *groſſeſt Error* (in point

of *Policy* and *Prudence*) to be imagin'd. It ſhould therefore (in my opinion) be the Ambition of us All, who are heartily the Sons of the Church of *England*, to prevail from All Topicks with Proteſtant Sectaries amongſt us, (who do agree with us already in the publick Profeſſion of being *Proteſtants*, and being equally *averſe* to the *Church* of *Rome*,) to *lay aſide* their Animoſities, if not to *bury* them *for ever* in the ſame *Church-yard*; to acquieſe in one Government by Law eſtabliſh'd; to ſubmit their *ſingle* Judgments to the *united* ones of their Superiours; to ſacrifice *Private* Diſcontents to *Publick* Intereſt, and to be *as a City which is at unity in it ſelf*; to conſider that as the Laws would be otherwiſe than they are, if their *Governours* were as *They*, ſo if *They* were as their *Governours*, the Laws would ſtill

ſtill be as they are by their own Contrivance; to keep in mind that as of Mortals, who are but Men on this ſide heaven, *He* is reckon'd to be the *Beſt* who has *feweſt Faults*, not *He* who has *none* in a State of Frailty, ſo of all Governments upon Earth, *That* ought to paſs for the moſt *Perfect*, (as well in reſpect of its legiſlative, as of its executive Adminiſtrations,) which is ſubject unto the *feweſt* and *moſt ſupportable Imperfections*.

Add to This the Conſideration, how many *Rebellions* and *Conjurations* rais'd by *Chriſtians* (ſo called) againſt their *Governours*, have brought *The Profeſſion* into an *Hatred* with *Jews* and *Gentiles* ever ſince; and tempted many even *at home* into This paſſionate Imprecation, *Sint Animæ noſtræ cum Philoſophis*. Nor can we ſay who were the

worſe, of men pretending to *Chriſtianity*, They who did *execute* what they intended on the 30 *of January*, or They who *Intended* onely to execute on the 5 *of November*, the barbarous Murther and Subverſion of King and Kingdom. And if our preſent *Diſſenters* (ſuch I mean of their Number as mean the Beſt,) would but impartially *conſider*, or ſufficiently *compare*, as well the *Principles*, and the *Parties*, as the *Projects Themſelves*, which Thoſe Two Days have made ſo ſignal, I cannot chuſe but believe They would abominate them *alike*; or the *Later* perhaps the *more*, for the Infamy Then brought on the *Engliſh Name*. I know not whether I ſhall be *able*, but I am *willing* to do them Service, by *undeceiving* and *diſabuſing* them in All the Caveats which enſue. Being as hopefull our *Common Enemies* will

will in Time make us *Friends*, as I am ſure our *Common Dangers* ought to make us all *intent* on our *Common Safety*. This they *will* and *muſt* do, in caſe we will but permit our ſelves, either in Piety, or in Prudence, to be provoked by our Enemies to Æmulation. For if All ſorts of *Papiſts*, even the *Sorboniſts*, and the *Jeſuits*, the *Dominicans*, and the *Franciſcans*, the Profeſſors of the *Gallican* and *Spaniſh Churches*, however differing in Opinions, and burning in Hatreds of one another, do yet *agree againſt the Proteſtants*, and in the ſame Church of *Rome*, as much as *Caiphas* a *Jew*, and *Pontius Pilate* a *Gentile*, did Both agree againſt *Jeſus Chriſt*; what can hinder All ſorts of *Proteſtants*, All the *Engliſh* ones eſpecially, (however divided in ſome Opinions and Diſaffections to one another, as much perhaps as

as even the *Moliniſts* and the *Janſeniſts* Themſelves,) from meeting together and *agreeing* in the ſame Church of *England*, whoſe Reformation is made Authentick by the Higheſt Authority under Heaven? Eſpecially when their *Agreement* is a moſt *Neceſſary Preſervative* of thoſe *Four* things which are *deareſt* to them, their *Religion*, their *Liberties*, their *Livelihoods*, and their *Lives?* What can hinder them from converting the moſt Inhumane Combination of our blood-thirſty Enemies, into an Excellent Security againſt it ſelf? or from making our remaining and yet preſent *Dangers* become the moſt *Inſtrumental* to our *Eſcape?*

There is a trite and ſtale objection, againſt the King, and the Biſhops, and againſt all Inferiour Men of the Church of *England*, that they are *Popiſhly affected*,

fected, if not a kind of *Caſſandrian Papiſts*. And This Objection or Calumny, how *weak* ſoever, has yet been ſtrong enough to be *miſchievous* unto a world of *well-meaning*, but *weaker* Brethren; although it has ever been *confuted* by all the Barbarous *Combinations*, and Diabolical *Conſpiracies*, againſt the Fathers and the Sons of the Church of *England*, from the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*, to *Theſe* we live in. For if there is in any of us ſuch a Tincture of Popery, or of Papiſtical Inclination, as the *Jeſuited Papiſts* have taught our *Jeſuited Proteſtants* to ſay and publiſh, why ſhould the *Emiſſaries of Rome* be more induſtriouſly intent upon *our* Deſtruction, (for being men of the *Church of England*,) than upon the Extirpation of all *other* Proteſtants in the World? Is it not becauſe the *Church of England*

is ſtill the *Ornament*, and the *Apology*, the *Support*, and the *Protection*, of All the Proteſtant Churches beyond Sea throughout the World? Is it not that *foreign Proteſtants* cannot be rooted out *with Eaſe*, or but perſecuted *with Safety*, whilſt there is a *Church of England*, to ſtand as a Rampire in the Way between *Them* and *Ruin*? Whereas deſtroy or extinguiſh the Church of *England*, and All the Reformed Churches abroad will fall to Ruin of Themſelves. If *Real Miracles* are not *ceaſed*, (as ſome ſay they *are*, and ſome that they are *not*,) The Church of *England*'s *Preſervation* (and of late more than ever,) is the beſt *Argument* I can think of, whereby to *prove* the *Continuance* of them. O that our *Separatiſts* were wiſe! that they underſtood This! that they would but

but conſider That Hand from Heaven, by which the chief Proteſtant King, and the chief Proteſtant Kingdom of all the World, and the chief Proteſtant Church which is the Security of the Reſt, are yet *alive* at This Day, to own and Honour their Deliverer, and to be *practically* thankfull for their Deliverance.

One thing more I have to ſay, in This *Monition* to the Reader, concerning both the *Nature*, and the *Liberty* of a Man's *Conſcience*; which He who offers to *invade*, and ſo to *violate*, does attempt to *make a Breach* on the *Gates of Heaven.* (As the Emperor **Maximilian* thought good to word it.) Only 'tis every Man's Concernment to learn exactly *what it is*, wherein the *Nature* of a Man's Conſcience, and the juſt *Liberty* is to *conſiſt*. I give a Caveat touching the firſt, in the

* *Hujus ſententiam Annales Hanc referunt, nullum enormius peccatum eſſe poſſe, quàm in Conſcientias exercere velle imperium. Nam Conſcientiis imperare, eſt Arcem Cœli invadere.*

Third Sermon following; and touching the ſecond in the Fourth. To each of wch if our *Dividers* will but deliberately advert, They will be much better Subjects both to *God* and the *King*, than they are at preſent; and we who are Lovers of the Government by Law eſtabliſh'd, ſhall have the fairer Quarter from them for That Conjunction. *This* (one would think) ſhould be agreed to, even by Men of All Parties: that if the *Conſciences* of *Some* (as Some do uſe the word *Conſcience*) contend for a *Liberty* to *reſiſt*, or at leaſt to *contradict*, and to *defame* the Laws in force, ſure the *Conſciences of others* may have a *Liberty* to *obey* them without offenſe. Which yet has been envied, or deny'd us, we know by *whom*. If, where the matter is *indifferent*, or barely *lawfull*, All the *immediate Laws* of *Men* are alſo the *mediate* Laws of *God*, by being

ing enacted by That Authority, which *God* has *enacted* we ſhall *obey*; and if it is a prime part of That *Chriſtian Liberty*, *wherewith Chriſt has made us free*, to *ſubmit our ſelves* (with S. *Peter*) *to every Ordinance of man*, and to do it *for the Lord's ſake*, (as S. *Peter* bids us,) 'Tis equally ſtrange, and unexcuſable, that They who call it moſt falſly their *Chriſtian Liberty*, to *deſpiſe Dominion, and ſpeak evil of Dignities*, to live in Schiſm and Diſobedience to Laws in force, ſhould ſeek to defraud us of That *genuine* and *True* Chriſtian Liberty, The Liberty to *obey ſuch as are over us in the Lord*, and ſuch as **Watch for our Safeties*, whilſt we are *Sleeping*. In this Grand Doctrine of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Doctrine of *ſubmiſſion to every Ordinance of man*, by way of Climax and Gradation from the bottom to the Top of All Authority upon Earth, (from

Gal. 5. 1.

Heb. 13. 17.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

the Conſtable or the Tithing-man who labours at the Plough, to Him who ſits upon the Throne as the Supreme Reſort of Juſtice, and to whoſe Determination the laſt Appeal lies,) we have *a Principle of Unity*, which either will bind up all our Breaches, or elſe will make our Diviſions innocent. For our Judgements all meeting in This One Point, (as very eaſily they may, and unavoidably they muſt, if we do heartily and truly believe the Goſpel,) All our *other* Diſagreements in point of Opinion or Perſwaſion will not be publickly *Inconvenient*, much leſs *Pernicious*: becauſe when *Inbred Inſurrections* are made impoſſible, (as they are in the Caſe premiſed,) no *Invaſions* from *without* can ever hurt us. On the other ſide I cannot forbear to prophecy, (wiſhing my Prophecy may

may be falſe, as it is modeſt and but conditional,) that if we fix not on ſome *Expedient* whereby to agree among our ſelves, (nor can I imagin any one likelier than the Great Principle of obedience to God's Anointed, whoſe Life is every day endanger'd for his Adherence to *our* Religion,) we ſhall not have a way left to keep out a *foreign Juriſdiction*, or to prevent its coming in with a foreign Force.

I have the more reaſon to hope, the greater reaſon I have to pray, that my Caveats may find their Readers in ſo much Temper as to *weigh* the ſeveral Arguments made uſe of in This Conjuncture, which are in hopes to *outweigh* whatſoever witty Malice may urge againſt them. And that This may be an Inſtance of God Almighty's great

great Mercy to This moſt *coveted*, and *indanger'd*, and (not deſpiſed, but) *Envied* Land, is ſo far the Hope; as it is the Prayer of

The Reader's well-meaning

and faithfull Servant

T. P.

THE GENERAL

HEADS or CONTENTS

of the ſeveral *Caveats.*

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How God is ſaid to be the Object of *Real Knowledge*, and how of *Faith onely*; and why *Faith* (rather than *Knowledge*) is *eſſentially* belonging to *All Religion.* p. 389.

A SEASONABLE

CAVEAT

Againſt the Dangers of

CREDULITY

IN OUR

Truſting the SPIRITS

Before we Try them;

Delivered in a

SERMON

BEFORE THE

KING

AT

WHITE-HALL

On the Firſt Sunday in *February*, $167\frac{8}{9}$.

By *THOMAS PIERCE* D. D. Domeſtick Chaplain to His Majeſty, and Dean of *Sarum*.

Publiſhed by His Majeſtie's eſpecial Command.

LONDON,
Printed by *E. F.* for *R. Davis*, Bookſeller in *Oxford*.
MDCLXXIX.

A DESCRIPTIVE

CAVEAT

AGAINST

CRYPTOCLASTS:

OR

Treating the SPIRITS

OF

Unbelief in a

SERMON

PREACHED AT

KING'S

IN

DUBLIN-HALL

On the 21st October, 1827.

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MDCCXXVII.

A SERMON PREACHED before the KING.

1 JOHN 4. 1.

But try the Spirits whether they be of God.

§ 1. THERE are Multitudes of Deceivers in these our last and worst Times, by way of *Antidote* unto whose *Venom* These words of S. *John* are a good *Provision*. And however they are *numerous*, I think they may fall under *two general Heads*. Some are so *credulous* as to believe *every Spirit*; and some so *Atheistically*, as to believe *none at all*. Both are *Enemies*

Vide Hæresin Jenxuanam apud Maffæium, *l.* 16.

to *Religion*, though *not* Both *alike*. For though the *firſt* are *bad* enough, the *laſt* are very much *worſe*. The *firſt* are *Meteors* in Religion, expreſſed to us in Scripture by *Clouds without water*, and *wandring Stars*; ſuch as are *carried to and fro with every Wind of* falſe *Doctrine*; men ſo *unlearned* and ſo *unſtable*, ſo in love with *New Light*, and ſo *given to change*, that not contented with one or two, (though the beſt and ſoundeſt,) *they heap up Teachers unto themſelves*; and by the *Novelty* of the Doctrine putting an eſtimate or value on him that brings it, they are eaſily made *Proſelytes* to every *New Prophet* who next beſpeaks them; little conſidering with S. *John*, (in the next words after my Text,) that *there are many falſe Prophets*, (*many* even in *His* Time, and many *more* ſure in *ours*,) *gone out into the World*. The *ſecond* ſort of Enemies (which are the *worſt* too) are the Diſciples of the Book which is call'd *Leviathan*; the greateſt *Monſter* in all the World, excepting onely *the Authour of it*. For if the perfecteſt Definition of *Man as Man*, is to be *Animal Reli-*

Religioſum, which ſtill includes *Rationale*, and therefore makes the moſt exact Definition, (as many great and good Writers have very rationally eſteem'd it;) then He muſt certainly be a **Monſter*, more properly then a *Man*, who is ſo *deſtitute* of *Reaſon*, as wholly to be *void* of *Religion* too. And for any one to Teach, (as the *Monſter of Malmesbury* has been permitted to doe in Print,) that there is *no Spirit at all*, or that there is *no incorporeal Subſtance*, (two Expreſſions of the ſame Thing,) what is it but to *pluck up all Religion by the Root?* 'Tis publickly to ſet up a *School of Atheiſm*. For *God* (if any thing) *is a Spirit*; not for *This* reaſon onely, becauſe our Apoſtle S. *John affirms* it, (whom the *Hobbiſts* will not believe;) but for this *other* reaſon alſo, (which even our *Hobbiſts* cannot but yield to,) that, ſuppoſing a *God* there is, (or that 'tis but *poſſible* for him to be,) He muſt be *Infinite*, and *Indiviſible*; and yet, we know, He can be *neither*, if He is any way *Corporeal*. For All *Corporeal* things have *Parts*, and ſo by conſequence are *diviſible*, and ſo by

* *Vid.* Arrian. Epict. *l.* 3. *c.* 29. *&* *l.* 4. *c.* 5. Plotin. *Enn.* 3. *l.* 2.

Joh. 4. 24.

by consequence are *finite*. And for *God* to be *finite*, or *divisible*, is for *God not to be God*; the worst and grossest of Contradictions. From whence it follows unavoidably, that for any one to *teach*, and to teach in *publick*, (not publickly from the *Pulpit*, but much *more* publickly from the *Press*,) that an *Incorporeal Substance* is in it self *a Contradiction*, (the Positive Doctrine of the * *Leviathan*,) is publickly to open *a School of Atheism*: It being *publickly to teach There is no Spirit*, and (by a Consequence unavoidable) *There is no God*. For every thing that is, is either an *Accident*, or a *Substance*. (What is *neither*, is *not*.) And every *Substance* (a *nobler* sort of *Being* then any *Accident* can *be*) is either *Corporeal*, or *Incorporeal*. That denominates a *Body*, and This a *Spirit*. To say that *God* is the *former*, implies the horridest *Contradiction*; (as hath been shewn;) and so He *must* be the *latter*, by undeniable Consecution. To say, *He is not a Spirit*, or *not an Immaterial Substance*, is neither better nor worse then to say, *He is not*. It is to say, *There is no such Thing*.

* p. 214.

§ 2. A-

§ 2. Againſt the dangerous Contagion of the premiſed *two Extremes*, S. *John* in this Text has timely given us *Two Caveats*; one *expreſs'd*, and another *imply'd*. Firſt, 'tis *expreſs'd* in plain terms, that, ſeeing *many falſe Prophets* (or falſe *Pretenders to the Spirit*) *are gone out into the World*, we are bound, for that Reaſon, *not to believe Every Spirit*. Next, 'tis as evidently *imply'd*, (as if it were expreſſed in words at length,) that *though Many Prophets are Falſe, we muſt not thence reckon that None are True:* as though many Lines are *crooked*, we muſt not thence argue that none are *ſtrait*; ſeeing every *crooked* Line muſt needs preſuppoſe and imply a *ſtrait* one. Nor may we ſottiſhly disbelieve *the Spirit of Holineſs and Truth*, for fear of believing with too much eaſe *a Spirit of Errour and Uncleanneſs*. But as my Text is in the *middle* between an important *Dehortation*, [*Believe not every Spirit*,] and as important a *Reaſon* of it, [*for many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World:*] ſo our Courſe is to be ſteer'd *in a middle way*, betwixt the *Scylla* of

of *Credulity*, and the *Charybdis* of *Unbelief*. We must *examin* all *Pretenders*, and *try* of what sort they are. We must get a *Lapis Lydius*, whereby to learn the true difference betwixt the *two sorts of Spirits* in the sixt Verse of this Chapter, *the Spirit of Truth*, and *the Spirit of Errour*: or, (to express it without the *Metonymie* which our Apostle here useth,) betwixt a *True*, and *False Prophet*; betwixt **a man of God*, and a **Dreamer of Dreams*; betwixt a *Theopneust*, and a *Dæmoniack*; betwixt a reall *Possessor* of Divine Revelations, and a phantastick *Pretender* to them. For as there were Prophets in the *Old* Testament, both *True* and *False*, so are there also in the **New*. As there were *Spirits* under the *Law*, too many to be *good*, so there are also under the *Gospel*. There was in That a *familiar Spirit*, (*Lev.* 20.27.) a *lying Spirit*, (1 *King.*22. 22.) and a *Spirit of Perverseness*, (*Isa.* 19. 14.) There is in This a *foul Spirit*, a *deaf and dumb Spirit*, (*Mar.* 9. 25.) a *Spirit of Errour and of Delusion*, (2 *Thess.* 2.11. 1 *Joh.* 4.6.) a *Spirit of Slumber*, (*Rom.* 11. 8.) Still the *more* and

* 1 King. 13. 1.
* Deut. 13. 1, 3.

* 2 Pet. 1. 21. *& ch.* 2. *ver.* 1.

and the *worſe* the unclean Spirits are, the greater *need* we have to *Try* them. And though there are alſo as many *Good* Spirits, as there are *Angels* who *never fell*; yet *all* their *Goodneſs* is but *derivative*, from the *one Spirit of God*, who is *God the Spirit*. To *Him* are aſcribed the famous *Gifts*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. And amongſt all the ſeverall *Gifts* wrought by *one and the ſame* Spirit, *the Diſcerning of Spirits* is worthily reckon'd to be a chief, (*v.* 10.) Which Gift of *Diſcerning* 'twixt good and bad Spirits, (as all the reſt,) *The Spirit of God divides to every man ſeverally as He will*, (*v.* 11.) to ſome in a *greater*, and to ſome in a *leſſer* meaſure. And in this Gift S. *Peter* did very much excell S. *Philip*. (For ſo 'tis obvious to collect from the 8th. of the *Acts*, by comparing the 13th. with the 23th. verſe.)

§ 3. Now whatever can be meant by the *Subjects* of *Triall* we are to make, whether Churches or Church-men, whether Prophecies or Prophets, whether Doctrins or Doctors, whether Inſpirations or men Inſpir'd, or every one of theſe equally; however *different* they may be, or *inconſiſtent* with one another; 'tis plain they *All* pretend *alike*

unto *the ſame Spirit of God.* And therefore δοκιμάζετε, *Try and prove them*, (ſays our Apoſtle,) whether they *are* what they *pretend:* whether really they are *Gold*, or do but eminently *gliſter:* whether they ſpeak by *Commiſſion*, and *as the Oracles of God*, or onely *run ere they are ſent*, inſpir'd by *Avarice*, and *Ambition*, and by the *Impulſe of the Devil:* whether they teach the ſound Doctrins of *Chriſt's Apoſtles* and of his *Church*, whoſe Faith and Doctrins we are to follow; or are but ſome of *the fooliſh Prophets* (in the 13th. of *Ezekiel*) *who follow their own Spirit, and propheſie out of their own Hearts; are like the Foxes in the Deſarts, have ſpoken Vanity, and ſeen Lies, ſaying, The Lord ſaith, and the Lord hath not ſent them.* In any caſe we muſt *try* them, of what ſort they are.

Ezek. 13. 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, &c.

§ 4. Nor muſt we onely try *Them*; but we muſt alſo *try the Rule* by which they *All* are to be *tried.* For ſeverall *Teſts* and *Rules* of *Triall* (who are *true* or *falſe Teachers*, and which Doctrins are *right* or *wrong*,) have been lately ſet up to the hurt of Souls, by the *Two* ſorts of Enemies whereof I ſpake in the beginning; to wit, *the Pretenders to Enthu-*

Enthuſiaſm, and *the Diſciples of the Leviathan*. The *firſt* of theſe will allow of no other *Teſt*, than the Sturdineſs and Strength of their own Perſwaſion, which it is their will and pleaſure to call *The Teſtimony within them*. And by *running* in a *Circle* they grow ſo *giddy*, that the longer we *Catechize*, the more we *loſe* them. And 'tis worthy to be obſerv'd, how they wreſt and miſapply the *Word of Life* to their *Deſtruction*. For, If we ask how they know they have a Teſtimony within them from God the Holy Ghoſt; *We know it* (ſay they) *by This, that* * *God hath given us of his Spirit.* If we ask how they know that He hath given them of his Spirit; *We know it* (they ſay) *by This, that* **we cannot ſin.* If we ask how they know that they cannot ſin; their Anſwer is, * *We are born of God.* If we ask how they know This; *We know it*, (they will anſwer) *becauſe we have* * *a new Name given us, which no man knows but He that hath it.* If we ask how they know of a new Name given them; they will anſwer, *We know it by that* **Spirit which dwelleth in us.* If we ask how they know the *Spirit of Truth* from the *Spirit of Errour*; their Anſwer is ſtill at hand, (and ſtill out of the Scriptures,)

* 1 Joh. 4. 13.

* 1 Joh. 3. 9.

* *Ibid.*

* Rev. 2. 17.

* Rom. 8. 11.

1 Joh. 4. 6. *He that knoweth God heareth us, and he that is not of God heareth not us.* If we ask them for a *Witneſs* whereby to *prove* it; * *The Spirit* (their Anſwer is) *beareth witneſs with our Spirits.* If we bid them *produce* their Witneſs; 1 Joh. 5. 10. *He that believeth* (they will ſay) *hath the witneſs in himſelf.* If we call for any *Witneſs of men*; ver. 9. they tell us, *The Witneſs of God is greater.* Thus they argue by their *Circular and Identical* way of diſcourſe, [*They have the Holy Spirit of God, becauſe they are* (forſooth) *aſſured*; and *aſſured of it they are, becauſe of the Spirit which dwelleth in them.*] So ſtrongly does *the Spirit of Perverſeneſs* ſhew it ſelf in ſuch as *are delivered up to believe a Lie.* (For that is ſometimes the caſe, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 11.)

The *other* Enemies of Religion, (who are withall by much the *worſt*,) in a *deriſion* and *contempt* of *ſupernatural Revelation*, will have no better *Teſt* of *true* and *falſe* Prophets, or of *right* and *wrong* Doctrins, than the *Warranty* and *Allowance* of the *Sovereign Powers*, in every *Kingdom* and *Commonwealth*, of whatſoever Denomination throughout the world. Which Poſition of the *Leviathan*, (fetcht as 'tis from *Japonia*, and there from the

Leviath. p. 36. & 169.

Ibid. p. 232.

* Rom. 8. 16.

the Sect of the *Jenxuani*) is ſo prodigiouſly abſurd, that it either makes *no difference* 'twixt *Right* and *Wrong*, and infers *True* and *Falſe* to be a couple of empty words, (which ſignifie nothing, or the ſame thing, *the Will and Pleaſure of the Prince*;) or elſe infers this Contradiction, that *the ſame* Things and Perſons are in ſeverall Times and Places both *True* and *Falſe*. So that according to This Poſition, the Chriſtian Religion was a *falſe* one under *all the Heathen* Emperours, who did publickly *prohibit the Teaching* of it; yet a moſt *true* one under *Conſtantine* ſurnam'd *the Great*, and under all the following Emperours, who ſtrictly *commanded* it to be *Taught*. *Jeſus Chriſt* (with Mr. *Hobbs*) muſt have been a *falſe Prophet*, as not approved of by *Herod* and the *Then-Emperour* of *Rome*; whilſt *Mahomed* muſt be a *true* one, becauſe allow'd by *the great Sultan*, ſupreme Governour of the *Turks*. The *Will* and *Pleaſure* of the *Prince* being ſet up by *That Monſter*, as the ſole *Touchſtone*, or *Criterion*, whereby a *Prophet*, or a *Doctrin*, or a *Religion* is to be *try'd*. *None* (ſays He) *but a Sovereign in a Chriſtian Commonwealth, can take notice what is, or what is not the Word of God.* A greater

Leviath. p. 250.

power than is ascribed by the *Jesuites themselves*, either to the *Bishop* or *Church* of *Rome:* a power to abrogate the *old*, and (as often as he will) to make a *new* Canon of Scripture, or *none at all.*

§ 5. Had such Seducers of the people appear'd in publick among the *Jews*, a present *Death without Mercy* had been inflicted as the wages of *Their* Iniquity. (*Deut.* 13. 5. and *ch.* 18. *v.* 20.) The Setters forth of new Doctrins in that *Mosaical* Dispensation could not escape their *publick Trials* in the Great *Parliament* of *Israel* they call'd *The Sanedrim*; and were condemn'd as false Teachers, either to be *strangl'd*, or *ston'd* to death. Yea, though they had shewn *Signs and Wonders*, and though *their Signs came to pass too*, yet could it not exempt them from suffering Death, in case they tended to *seduce* the silly Admirers of their Wonders *to worship Idols*, or any other way *to enervate the Law of Moses:* which none could be allow'd to doe, and yet be thought a *True Prophet*, unless he could doe *as real Miracles* as *Moses*, and give as *cogent Demonstrations* as *Moses* had given, of his having been *inspired and sent by God.* Therefore *None* but the *Messias*, who *out-did Moses*,

Deut. 13. 1, 2.

Moſes, and that as well in point of *Miracle*, as in *Holineſs of Life*, and in *illuſtrating* or *compleating the whole Moral Law*, could lawfully *aboliſh the Ceremonial*. Yea even Thoſe *Divine* Prophets or *Men of God* (as they were call'd) who ſtill *aſſerted* the Law of *Moſes*, and diſſwaded men with vehemence from Idolatry and Schiſm, were fain to *prove* they were of God by unfeigned Miracles. By ſuch a Real Miracle of the anonymous Prophet at *Bethel*, *Jeroboam*'s Hand was *dry'd up, and reſtored* to him. By ſuch a Miracle of *Elijah*, *the Fire of the Lord fell down from Heaven*, and conſum'd the Burnt-ſacrifice, together with the Altar on which it lay. Whereby the People were *incens'd* againſt the falſe Prophets of *Baal*, and preſently *ſlew* them all as Cheats *by the River Kiſhon*. By ſuch a Miracle of *Eliſha*, even *Naaman an Idolater* was ſuddenly *cleanſed* from his *Leproſie*, and convinced of *Jehovah*'s being the onely *true God*. By the like unfeigned Miracles, *Moſes* baffled all the *lying* ones of the Sorcerers in *Ægypt*. And if the Prophets *Then* had need of ſhewing many and great Miracles, to prove the Truth of *That* Religion which the *Iſraelites* were then in Poſſeſſion of; How much a *greater* need

1 King. 13. 4,6.

1 King. 18. 38, 40.

2 King. 5. 15.

need of Miracles ſhould *our Seducers* ſtand in, whereby to make us leave our *Old*, and where-with to draw us on to their *New* Beliefs? That Doctrin (for example) of *Jeſus Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, [that we muſt *obey them who have the Rule over us*, and that we muſt *ſubmit our ſelves to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's ſake*,] was confirmed by *greater* Miracles (if any greater *can be*) then *Moſes* and *the Prophets* confirm'd theirs by. And by Conſequence, if our Pretenders to ſupernatural Illumination will have us adhere to their *New Doctrin*, [that we muſt *not ſubmit to every Ordinance of man, but rebell againſt them*; *nor obey, but reſiſt ſuch as have the Rule over us*; *nor do any thing in Religion with any Decency or Order, but all as rudely and as confuſedly as we can*,] they muſt perſwade us by *greater* Miracles than thoſe of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, whom we believe. At leaſt they muſt be able to convince *us* of Errour in Life and Doctrin, (as *Moſes* did *Corah* and all his Separatiſt-Relations,) by commanding the Earth to open, and to ſwallow us up quick: or ſtrike us dead without a blow, (juſt as *Peter* did *Ananias*,) for our uſurping That Authority to preach God's Word, which our *Schiſmaticks*

Num. 16.

maticks and *Enthusiasts* of each Extreme are wont to arrogate as a *Right* belonging onely to *themselves*. But (God knows) we have too many, who need *no working of Signs and Wonders* to deceive them: so very fond they are of *Novelties* in Religion it self, that they are often drawn from it *without a Miracle*. Yea, if the *True* Prophet from *Judah* could suffer himself to be deceiv'd by the cunning *False* Prophet who dwelt in *Bethel*, (1 *King*. 13. 18.) for which (not the *False*, but) the *True* Prophet was *slain*; (*v*. 24.) how apt are *others* to be deceiv'd who are *no Prophets at all?* Very great need therefore we have, to *Try* Pretenders to the Spirit, before we *Trust* them, whether or no they have indeed a *Prophetick* Spirit; and whether they speak the mind of God by any *Immediate Revelation*.

§ 6. A *general* Rule whereby to try them (though 'tis particularly apply'd) S. *John* sets down in the next verse after my Text; *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every Spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God*. A Text whose pithy Brevity makes it difficult and obscure, and so it stands in some need of an Explication. I take its meaning to be This. Every Spirit which *confesseth*, or every Pretender who *owns* our Saviour, not onely *by*

word of Mouth, but in *Life* and *Practice*, and *from the Heart*, both as *Jesus* a *Saviour*, and as *Christ* a *King* too; Every one who does own him as well by his *Faith*, as his *Confession*, and as well by his *Obedience*, as by his *Faith*, to be the onely true *Shiloh* that was to come; Every one who does own him to be come *in the Flesh too*, not onely in his *Divine*, but in his *Humane* Nature also, which *Cerinthus* and *Ebion* and *Simon Magus did deny*; (unto whom in particular S. *John* alludes in this place;) lastly, Every one who owns him in his *Exinanition*, in his most *despicable* Condition, which made his *Friends* to fly from him, and *Peter himself* to disavow him; Every one who does own him in his tremendous *Crucifixion*, his *Death*, and *Burial*, and confesseth him *even so* to be * *the Son of the living God*, or *God manifest in the Flesh*, 'Tis plain that every *such* Spirit must be concluded to be *of God*.

*Mat. 16. 16.

So that if any shall here object against S. *John*'s Rule of Triall, that many *Heretick's and Schismaticks do confess Jesus Christ to be come in the Flesh*, who notwithstanding are *of the Devil*, and *not of God*; Two Answers are to be given for the Objector's behoof and satisfaction; one from *Estius*, and another from *Tirinus*. (Though the Substance of them Both I have anticipated already.)

Estius

Eſtius anſwers, that S. *John* did direct This Rule againſt the Hereticks of his own Times, who *denied Jeſus Chriſt to have come in the Fleſh:* and ſuch were thoſe Three whom I nam'd a little before. Which Anſwer is indeed *good*, but not *ſufficient*. *Irinus* therefore adds fitly, that by our *Confeſſing Jeſus Chriſt to have come in the Fleſh*, is meant our Confeſſing and Believing (to wit, our *practical* Believing) that *Jeſus Chriſt* is *the Meſſias*; both *a Saviour and a Prince*, (as S. *Peter* calls him,) who *gives Repentance unto Iſrael, and Forgiveneſs of ſins*. Not Forgiveneſs *without* Repentance, nor Forgiveneſs *before* Repentance; but Repentance in the *firſt* place, and Forgiveneſs in the *ſecond*. In which very order, both of Dignity and Nature, S. *Peter* had exhorted to Both before, (*ch.* 3. *v.* 19.) *Repent, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord*. And all *ſincere* Repentance implies *Obedience*, as the ſame S. *Peter* argues, *Act.* 5. 32. This Anſwer is very *good* and *ſufficient* too, unleſs, by being *too ſhort*, it may be alſo *too obſcure*, or not ſufficiently perſpicuous to ſome of the ſloweſt apprehenſions; for which defect in the next place I ſhall endeavour to make amends.

Act. 5. 31. *Ibid.*

§ 7. And becauſe where the Touchſtone it

ſelf is Falſe, all ſorts of Trial muſt needs be fooliſh; Therefore Pretenders to the Spirit are to be *try'd* by ſuch a *Touchſtone*, as needeth not it ſelf *Another* Touchſtone for its *Trial.* And *ſuch* a *Touchſtone* is to be taken out of thoſe plaineſt Places of Scripture, whoſe ſenſe and meaning is agreed on even by men of *All Judgements*; Texts deliver'd in ſuch clear and univocal Terms, that *oppoſite* Parties do apprehend them in *the very ſame way*; And as they never *have* been yet, ſo they never *can* be matter of any *Cavil*, or *Diſpute*. And becauſe I pretend not to *teach* my Fellow-*Teachers*, or ſuch as need not to be thus taught, (though the *moſt knowing* may not diſdain to be put in *remembrance* of what they *know*,) but onely the *Ignorant* and the *Unſtable*, who (for want of due *Knowledge*, or of ſufficient *Conſideration*,) are like *Clouds without water, carried about of Winds*, (as S. *Jude* deſcribes them;) I ſhall be carefull that every Part of the *Teſt* or *Criterion* I am to give, may be *ſhort*, and yet *eaſie*, and (I hope) *without all Queſtion*. The ſeveral *Parts* of the Touchſtone will be no fewer than 6 or 7. Nor are the *Spirits to be try'd* by any *one* or *two* of them, but by *All put together, whether or no they are of God.*

Joh. 14. 17. First, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of*

of Truth. And therefore if any man, who is outwardly of a *seeming good Life*, is yet of very *ill Judgement* in *Fundamentals*, in Points *essential to Christianity*, as in the Doctrin of *Obedience to every Ordinance of Man*, to *the Higher Powers*, to *Them that have the Rule over us, and do watch for our Souls*; (a Doctrin running in a Vein throughout the Body of the Gospel, and essentially belonging to All Religion;) especially if he ascribes to a *sinfull man* (not to say, *The Man of Sin*,) That Incommunicable Attribute of *God* himself, [*Infallibility*,] and gives to every Priest the Privilege to doe a much greater Miracle than ere was done by *Christ* Himself, so far forth to transubstantiate a piece of Bread, as first to *make* his own Saviour, and then to *eat* him; He must needs be misinstructed by the *Spirit of Errour* and *Fascination*, the Spirit with which he is *bewitch'd*, (as S. *Paul* speaks to the *Galatians*,) let his outward Conversation be what it will, let his visible Course of life be never so plausible, or severe.

1 Pet. 2. 13. Rom. 13. 1. Heb. 13. 17. 1 Joh. 4. 6. Act. 8. 9, 11. Gal. 3. 1.

Next, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Holiness and Purity*, as well as *Truth*. And therefore if any man, who is *Orthodox*, is at the same time *Dishonest*, of some *good Opinions*, but *evil Practice*, does *hold the Truth*, but *in unrighteousness*; especially if he takes upon him (by That Vi-

Rom. 1. 4, 18.

per of Morality and all Religion, the *Jesuites Doctrine of* **Probability*) not onely to *allow*, but to *incourage* and *abett* the grosseſt Villanies in the World, (without exception;) He is not seaſon'd by *the Holy*, but *the* [a] *Unclean Spirit*, let his *Orthodoxie* of judgement, as to ſome Fundamentals, be what it can. An *honeſt Heathen* is not ſo bad as a *Chriſtian Knave*.

* *Vid. Les Provinciales* 5. 6. & Caramuel *de Theologiâ Fundamentali p.* 71,72. & Eſcobar *Theol. Moral. Tom.* 1. *l.* 2. *c.* 2. *p.* 34. 39. 43. 160. &c.

[a] Mar. 5. 8.

[b] Eph. 4. 3, 4.

Thirdly, The Spirit that is of God is [b] *the Spirit of Unity and Love*. And therefore if any ſort of men ſhall take upon them to be *Reformers* by making *Schiſm*, by diſſolving *the Bond of Peace*, wherein *the Unity of the Spirit is to be kept*, and ſhall *crumble* Religion into as many ſmall Parcells, as the Caprices of Idle men ſhall have the liberty to ſuggeſt; eſpecially if they ſhall labour to ſeparate Subjects from their Sovereign, by abſolving them from their Oaths of Chriſtian Obedience and Fidelity, or by inſtructing them to *ſwear*, with a Deſign to be *forſworn*; They are miſs-led by *That Spirit* whoſe Name is *Legion*, even the *Spirit of Diviſion*, That *old* and cunning *Serpent which deceiveth the whole World*.

Mar. 5. 9.

Rev. 12. 9.

Fourthly, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Meekneſs and of Order*. And therefore if any *deſpiſe Dominion*, and *ſpeak evil of Dignities*, and in pretenſe of being *the Meek ones* who are by right

1 Cor. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 4. 23.

right of Promise *to inherit the Earth*, demurely tread upon Crowns and Crosiers, and love to be levelling with their Feet, whatsoever (according to God's special Providence) does overtop them by Head and Shoulders; especially if they presume to place the single *Bishop of Rome* above *General Councils*, invest him with a Power to *excommunicate Kings*, and *subvert* whole *Kingdoms*, and make the People hope to *Merit* by the most prodigious *Murthers*; They must be led by *That Spirit*, which is called *The Angel of the Bottomless Pit, Abaddon*, and Ἀπολλύων, that is, *Destroyer*; even *the Spirit which is still working in the Children of Disobedience.* Rev. 9. 11. Eph. 2. 2.

Fiftly, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Sincerity*, enduing All whom He inhabits with an absolute *Simplicity* and *Singleness of Heart*. And therefore They who do hold up their *Left* hand *to God*, but their *Right* against their *Governours*; having *Godliness* in their *Profession*, but practical *Atheism* in their *Lives*; hating *Idols* from the Teeth outwards, but loving *Sacriledge* from the Heart; crying down *Superstition*, but preaching up the Creature-comforts flowing from *Plunder*, which they call *Providence*; declaring with zeal against the *Prelates*, but ever voting up the *Papacy* of their *Superintendents*; declaiming much against the

the *Sectaries* who are not of their *Denomination*, but breaking down the *Hedge of Discipline* whereby the *Herds* are to be kept from *God's Inclosure*; especially They who have invented the Art of Æquivocating and Cheating, the Art of Swearing any thing *safely*, by mental Exceptions and Reservations, the Art of Couzenage by the Contract they call *Mohatra*, and the like; must needs be acted by *that Spirit* whom the Scripture has expressed by *the Father of Lies*, even *the Spirit of Hypocrisie*, That black Prince of Darkness, which *transforms himself* with ease *into an Angel of light*.

Joh. 8. 44. 2 Cor. 11. 14.

Sixtly, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Knowledge, and Wisedom, and Understanding*. And therefore if any man cites Scripture against the whole *Tenor* and *Stream* of Scripture, and *wanders* into the *wrong* way, even by That very *Word* which does direct him into the *Right* one; especially if he levells the *Canon of Scripture* with the *Apocrypha*, and makes the Pure *Word of God* to truckle humbly under *Tradition*, whereby it becomes * *of none effect*; if men so learned, and so acute, and so sagacious as the *Jesuites*, after all the heinous things they have *done* and *taught*, are so far from discerning *what Spirit they are of*, that they utterly mistake an *Evil* Spirit for a *Good* one; a Spirit from *Hell*, for one from *Heaven*; the Spirit which

Isa. 11. 2.

* Matth. 15. 6. Mar. 7. 13.

which reigns in *the Court of Rome*, for the Spirit which guides in *the Church of England*; if they can think it the Top of Piety, to advance the Lord *Jesus* quite against the Lord *Christ*, and make the *Christian Religion* the greatest *Transgression* of *Itself* (which moves the *Jansenists* to call them *The Antichristian Society*;) if they can take it for the Comble of *Christian* Merit and Perfection, to espouse and put in practice this *Turkish* Maxime, that Religion is to be propagated (where 'tis possible) by the *Sword*; They must needs be possess'd by the *Spirit of Slumber*, the *Spirit of dead Sleep*, *the God of this World which blindeth the mind:* for so the Devil is once call'd, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Rom. 11. 8. Isa. 29. 10.

What I have thus drawn out at *length*, our Blessed Lord does wind up into This *short Bottom*, (Matth. 7. 20.) *Ye shall know them by their Fruits.* But the Fruits of *That Spirit that is of God* are reckon'd up by S. *Paul* to be such as These; *Love*, *Joy*, *Peace*, *Long-suffering*, *Gentleness*, *Meekness*, *Goodness*, and the like. And therefore They who, in stead of *loving Enemies*, do persecute and oppress the *mystical Members* of the same *Body* whereof *Christ* is the *Head*; who lay the *Cross* of *Christ Jesus* on Christian *Shoulders*, robbing one of a Living, another of a Liberty, a third of a Life; and this for no other Crime than being *constantly Conscientious*, Gal. 5. 22, 23.

(and very real *Friends* to *All*, becauſe the *Flatterers* of *None*, though able to *injure*, or to *oblige* them ;) muſt needs be managed by That *carnal* and *unclean Spirit*, which makes them ſo *fruitfull* and ſo abounding in the *works of the Fleſh:* ſuch as *Hatred*, *Variance*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Seditions*, *Hereſies*, and the like.

Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

§ 8. Now if All theſe Particulars be laid together in our minds, I ſuppoſe we have a *Touchſtone* to *Try the Spirits* of *Pretenders*, whether or no they are *of God* ; and ſuch a Touchſtone, as needs not it ſelf another Touchſtone to be Try'd by. But becauſe the *beſt* Touchſtone is *nothing worth* to ſuch as know not how to *uſe* it, we ſhall doe well to take notice of one Rule more in the uſing of it. For, conſidering how many **Vices* do too much *border* and *confine* upon ſeveral *Vertues*, and how many *Lies* are more *plauſible* to fleſh and bloud than many *Truths* ; and hardly any thing can be ſo *falſe*, but may have *Colours* and *Probabilities* to *ſet it off* ; (being neatly laid on by men ingeniouſly wicked ;) and that a multitude of *Ignaro's* do often *ſwallow* the groſſeſt *Errours*, (preſented to them in the *Diſguiſe* of the greateſt *Truths*,) by not diſtinguiſhing *Words* (as they ought) from *Things*, and blending one thing with another, and taking them down all at once, without any *maſti-*

** Troppo confina la Virtu col Vitio.*

cating

cating or *chewing*; I say, for This reason, we must not pass our *last Judgement* upon Pretenders to the Spirit, untill we have made our selves acquainted as well with their *Habits*, as with their *Acts*; as well with the *main* or *general* current of their *Lives*, as with the meer *conduct* and *carrying-on* of their *Designs*; with the *Means* they make *use* of, as well as with the *End* they pretend to *aim* at; with the *Building* which is *erected*, as well as with the *Scaffold* by which 'tis *rais'd*; with *All* their Actions in a lump, as well as with the *most specious* and *fairest* of them. And when This is done throughly, Then let the Hypocrites and Impostors be what they will, let the *Forms* of Godliness and the *Features* of Religion be never so artificially and neatly drawn, let the *Colours* be laid on with never so delicate a *Pencill*, and let that *Pencill* also be managed with never so exquisite *Address*; 'twill be most *easie* to find the *difference* between the *Picture* and the *Life*. Let *Zeuxis* his lively *Grapes* be never so apt to *deceive* the *Birds*, yet the *Deadness* of his *Boy* will *unfold* the *Cheat*.

§ 9. The very Truth of it is, *We* should be utterly *unexcusable*, if *we* should fall into the *Snare* of *The certain men among us crept in unawares*, of either sort, because their *Arts* of deceiving are *gross* and *obvious*; fit to infatuate Understandings of the

lowest size onely, and such as are *willing* to be deluded. There were *Counterfeits* in the most primitive and purest Times of the Church, who were *brave Cheats indeed*; who, besides their *Form of Godlinesse*, besides their *Praying* and their *Preaching*, could also set forth themselves by *Signs and Wonders*. The Devil had taught them That subtil Trick of *transforming themselves into Angels of light*; and so of *deceiving (if it were possible) the very Elect*. Such were *Barchochebas*, *Apollonius*, and *Simon Magus*. Whereof the First had got a faculty even of *vomiting flames of Fire*; the Second could tell the men of *Ephesus*, what in That very Hour was done at *Rome*; the Third (like a *Cherub*) could *fly abroad into the Air*. So that *They* had some kind of *Colour* for their giving out themselves to be *the Messengers of Heaven*, some *Pretences* for their Broaching a *New Theology* to the People; because their Counterfeited Miracles, however derived from *below*, might *seem* at least *to short Reasons* to have been given them from *Above*. And to be couzen'd by such as *These*, were a more *tolerable* Infirmity; a Credulity more to be *pitied*, and very much *more* (rather than *less*) to be *pardon'd* also. The *Magicians* also in *Ægypt* were such admirable Deceivers, that They were able (as well as *Aaron*) to turn their *Rods* into *Serpents*, and their *Slime* into *Frogs*, and their

2 Thess. 2. 9.
2 Cor. 11. 14.

Matth. 24. 24.

Exod. 7. & 8.

their *Waters* into *Bloud.* So as if *Moſes* and *Aaron* (through God's Aſſiſtance) had not publickly convicted them of downright *Sorcery and Inchantment*, (wherein the Magicians grew eminent through the Aſſiſtance of the Devil;) If *Aaron's Rod* at laſt had not *ſwallow'd up Their Rods*, and turn'd *the Duſt into Lice through all the Land*, wch *the Magicians could not doe*, but confeſſed (to their own ſhame) that *The finger of God was in it*; Laſtly, if *Moſes* had not ſmitten the very *Sorcerers themſelves* (as well as the *reſt* of the *Ægyptians*) *with Boyls and Blains*, inſomuch that *the Magicians could not ſtand before Moſes*; They had had a ſhrewd Advantage in the deceiving of the People, and the People *ſo* deceiv'd had been excuſable *à Tanto.* Whereas our *modern Enthuſiaſts*, or *Pretenders to Revelation*, and to *a Teſtimony within them from God the Holy Ghoſt*, are not ſo much as *good Jugglers*; They are *woefull* Impoſtors, and *ſilly* Cheats; ſuch as Satan indeed has furniſhed with very *much Induſtry*, but with very *ſmall Wit*; whereby He does not more ſtrongly *Tempt* them, than he *diſcovers* them to be *His.* They being ſo *far* from being indow'd with *extraordinary Gifts*, whereby to prove to us an *extraordinary Commiſſion*; ſo *far* from *ſetting out themſelves* by *Signs and Wonders*, (like thoſe *Primitive Deceivers* of

whom our Saviour gave all his Disciples *Warning*, (in the 24th. of S. *Matthew*,) or like Those of whom *Moses* forewarn'd His People, (in the 13th. of *Deuteronomy*;) that they *come short* of most men of the *Church of England*, even in *Those very things* wherein they would be thought *eminent*. The onely *Gifts of the Spirit* which they pretend to, are but *Praying* and *Preaching*; in their Performances of which they *signalize* themselves by *Nothing*; or at least by *nothing more*, than *Noise*, and *Nonsense*. The *Gift of Tongues*, or the *Gift of Healing*, or *the Gift of being subject to Higher Powers, for Conscience sake*, or *for the Lord's*, or any other such remarkable *Apostolical Gift of the Holy Ghost*, I never heard that our Adversaries on either side did ever yet so much as *pretend* unto. They seem to be as unapt to *obey their Governors for Conscience sake*, (which is one special Gift of the Holy Ghost,) as to *speak with new Tongues*, or to *raise the Dead*.

§ 10. Now if those *Exquisite Pretenders*, in the Infancy of the Gospel, *Barchochebas* a *Jew*, and *Apollonius Tyanæus* an arrant *Heathen*, *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Basilides*, and the like, who by ***Profession*** at least were *Christians*, were not *Then* to be believ'd, notwithstanding their *Inchantment* and *Magick-miracles*; If a *false* ***Prophet*** under the *Law*, who led the People into *New Errours*, (as *Vincentius*

tius Lirinenſis expounds that Paſſage *Deut.* 13. 1, 2, 3. and applies it to a *falſe Teacher* in the Times of Chriſtianity, in particular and by name, to *Valentinus*, *Donatus*, *Photinus*, *Apollinaris*,) was not onely not to be *heeded* or *hearkened* to, but alſo was by That Law to be *put to Death*; yea (one ſtep farther,) *If an Angel from Heaven, who ſhall preach another Doctrin than what hath hitherto been deliver'd*, (whereby to lead us into *Rebellion*, or *Schiſm*, or *Sacrilege*, or any Conſpiracy whatſoever againſt the Government we are under,) muſt be no otherwiſe entertain'd, than with *an Anathema Maranatha*; How much leſs may our *Shallower* and *Unskilfuller* Impoſtors be believed to be *of God* upon their own *ſingle Word*, and *without a Witneſs*, whilſt they cannot confirm or commend their *Novelties*, no not ſo much as by *ſeeming Miracles*? no not ſo much as *That Man of Sin*, *That Son of Perdition*, of whoſe *Coming* S. *Paul* ſaith to his *Theſſalonians*, that 'tis *after the working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and* (with ſtupendous, though) *lying Wonders*? Vin. Lir. c. 15. 2 Theſſ. 2. 3, 9.

But grant they had (what they have *not*) an Ability to ſhew us ſome *Signs and Wonders*; yet *Apollonius Tyanæus* would put them down. Matth. 24. 24.

Suppoſe they *preached* extremely *well*, (as 'tis plain they do *not*,) yet *Photinus* and *Neſtorius* would go beyond them. Matth. 7. 22.

Do

Matth. 23. 14.

Do they make very *long Prayers?* So did the *Phariſees* for a *Pretence*, that they might the more ſlily *devour Orphans and Widows houſes.*

Have they a readineſs and facility in citing Scripture? So had *Julian the Apoſtate* when he diſputed againſt the Goſpel. So had *Satan* in his *tempting* our Bleſſed *Saviour*; when he wreſted God's Oracles with as much ſubtilty and addreſs, as the *keeneſt* of our Recuſants (of what ſtrain ſoever) are wont to do.

Matth. 4. 4, 6.

Do they pretend their being warranted by an immediate *Revelation?* So did *Numa* the *Roman*; and ſo did *Eumenes* the *Greek:* ſo did *Mahomed* the *Saracen*; and *Alarichus* the *Goth:* laſtly, ſo did the Pretenders in the Primitive Church; which made S. *John* exhort Chriſtians *to Try the Spirits*; alledging This for his reaſon, that *many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World.*

Quomodo ob Religionem Magni, quibus Magnitudo de irreligioſitate provenit? Tertull. *Apolog. cap.* 25. *p.* 56.

Is God's *permitting* them to be *proſperous*, or to *ſin on* with great *Impunity*, any Argument that he *approves* them? No, 'tis the weakeſt way of reaſoning which our Adverſaries of *Rome* have delighted in. For, (beſides that we find them confuted often by their Afflictions,) God *permits*, what he *abominates*, his own *Diſhonour.* How patiently did he permit the *Diſobedience* of the *Firſt Adam*, and *Crucifixion* of the *Second?* All the Villanies in the world

world do come to pass by God's *Permission*, however *contrary* they are to his *Rules* and *Precepts*. And if *prosperous Impiety* does therefore *cease* to be *Impiety*, because 'tis *prosperous* and *permitted*, (that is) *not hinder'd by force and violence*, (inconsistent with a *free* and a *moral* Agent;) Then the great *Sultan*, and the great *Cham*, and the great *Mogul*, as well as the great *Bishop of Rome*, are by an equally-sound Consequence the greatest *Favourites of Heaven*. And then the Argument of* *Symmachus* had been unanswerably conclusive against the *Primitive Christians*, who for 300 years and upwards lay groaning under *the Yoke* of the *Heathens Tyranny*. Lastly, if *Permission* were still a Mark of *Approbation*; Then *Dionysius* (or *Diagoras*) had argued logically well, when, having robb'd the *Delphick Temple*, & immediately after *escap'd a Shipwreck*, he gave it out, that *the Gods had approv'd his Sacrilege*. Not at all that he *believ'd*, but *laught* at Providence.

§ 11. What now can be said farther, in the behalf of our *Pretenders* to the *same Spirit's Illumination*, which clear'd the Heads of the Apostles, and warm'd their Hearts? Can it be said they live *strict* and *religious lives*, though lives of *Schism* and *Disobedience* to humane *Laws* and *Lawgivers*, expresly said in Holy Scripture to be the *Ordinances of God?* But admit it were *True*, (which yet is *so false*, that it implies a *Contradiction*,) 'twere not

E *pre-*

* *apud* Prudentium *ad Valentin. Si Romanæ Religiones regna præstant, nunquam retro Judæa regnásset, Despectrix communium istarum Divinitatum.* Tertull. *Apol. c. 26. p. 57.*

Hieron. *ad Marcellam.*

prevailing. For the Heretick *Montanus* grew so *proud* of his *Strictneſs*, of his *Demure* Course of *life* in point of *Abſtinence and Sobriety*, and ſuffering *Hardſhips*, as to believe himſelf in Time to be *The Paraclete* downright; not a *Godly man* onely, but even *The Holy Spirit of God*. In which caſe 'tis very evident, that even his *ſtrictneſs* was his *Diſeaſe*: and that *the Spirit* which *overrul'd* him was from his *Spleen*. The Heathen *Brachmans* alſo of *India* were ſo *temperate*, and *chaſt*, and ſo addicted to *Self-denials*, (in *order to their gaining upon the opinions of the People with whom they liv'd,) that they ſeemed (in all appearance) to *uſe This World as not abuſing it:* (exactly ſo as S. *Paul* exhorts the followers of *Chriſt*.) Such an *externally-ſtrict* Perſon was the Papalins S. *Francis*; who yet diſcover'd his *Humility* and *paſſive Meekneſs* (as I have read many years ſince, *apud Authorem neſcio Quem*, as *Cicero* ſpeaks in the like caſe,) to have partly been a *Cloak*, and partly an *Inſtrument* of his *Pride*. For, being ask'd why he *rejoyced* amidſt the *hardſhips* of his *Impriſonment*, *Becauſe* (ſaid he) *the whole world will even adore and canonize me among their Saints.* Hereby we ſee the ſtrict Neceſſity of the laſt Rule I mention'd for the right uſing of the Great Rule by w^ch the Spirits are to be Tried. For,

Philoſtrat. *l.* 3.

* Maffæi *Hiſt. Ind. l.* 12. *p.*319. *& l.* 14. *p.* 378.

1 Cor. 7. 31.

Ideo me exultare noveritis, quia adhuc Sanctus per totum Seculum adorabor.

Laſtly, by neglecting to *Try the Spirits* of Pretenders, *whether* or no *they be of God*, (and to try them

them *impartially* by *every part* of That *Touchstone* I lately gave,) How very many have we *known* of our poor *Separatists* in *England*, (acted as they have been by the late Emissaries of *Rome*,) so strangely *shallow*, and *over-credulous*, as readily to imagin that every Schismatick is a *Saint*, who is not a *Sabbath-breaker*, or *Swearer*, not a *Drunkard*, or an *Adulterer*, and is so or so *qualified* in point of *Judgement*; or (to speak more exactly) in point of *Party*, and of *Opinion*? It must therefore be well consider'd, and carried constantly in mind by such as These, that of the two 'tis less intolerable to be a *Swearer*, than a *Rebel*; a *Drunkard*, than a *Thief*; a *common* Thief, than a *Sacrilegious* one; and a less horrid thing, to be *corporally vile*, than to be *spiritually* proud of one's own *Perfections*. We must beware of all the *former*, as we ever hope to *fly from the wrath to come*; but more especially of the *latter*, as being much the more *Luciferian* Sins. Sins which can never attend men to Heaven, having brought down the Angels of Heaven to Hell. *Drunkenness* and *Whoredom* (however *damning*) are Sins *the Devil cannot commit*: but *Envy*, and *Malice*, and *Schism*, and *Sacrilege*, *Hypocrisie*, and *Rebellion*, and *intoxicating Pride*, are *peculiar* to him; they are the *Devil*'s Sins so *properly*, that they are properly call'd *Deviliſh* in *Men*, or *Christians*, whereever found. And as These of all Sins are much the most *Diabolical*, so they are the most *damning* of any other, for ought I can collect from

the words of *Christ*, (*Matth.* 23. 14.) and by the words of S. *Peter*, (2 *Pet.* 2 9, 10.) If they who *hate* our Congregations and way of Worship, because they judge *the Holy Ghost* to have *forsaken our* Meetings, and to *dwell onely in theirs*, or because we do not easily *shut the Door* against Sinners, (till by Authority authoriz'd,) though they are under the Reputation either of *Drunkenness*, or *Whoredom*, or any other the like *Scandalous* and *Deadly* Sin, but not under the Sentence of *legal Excommunication*, (till when we cannot *lawfully* shut them out from our Communion,) I say, if the Censurers of our Patience and Longanimity towards such would but turn their Eyes *inwards*, or duely reflect *upon themselves*, and compare those Sins which *the Devil never commits*, with those several *other* Sins which are *proper* to him; If they would not onely *observe*, but also *remember*, and *consider*, and religiously *lay to heart*, the terrible Emphasis and force S. *Peter* puts on the word μάλιστα, saying of Them who *despise Government*, that they are *chiefly*, or *most especially*, *reserved by the Lord unto the day of Judgement to be punished*; and the most formidable Importance of That *Greater Damnation*, which our Saviour has denounced against those Hypocrites, who *for a Pretence do make long Prayers*; I say again, if our dissenting & separating Brethren (in love and pity to whose Souls we pray & preach for their Conformity)

2 Pet. 2. 9, 10.

Matth. 23. 14.

ty) would have the Patience and the Humility to chew enough on theſe things, They would think with more Charity of *our* Communion, and with leſs Arrogance of their *own*. They would not *ſeparate* from us *Then*, unleſs for *contrary* Inducements than *now* do move them. They would ſeparate from us *Then*, in an humble opinion of their *own Vileneſs*; ſaying from the heart with the meek *Centurion*, *Lord, we are not worthy that Thou ſhouldſt enter under our Roof*, and are by conſequence *unworthy* to have *admittance* under *Thine*. They would not ſeparate from us *Then*, unleſs in the Spirit of S. *Peter*, afraid to approach unto *Chriſt* himſelf, with a *Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a Sinfull man*. They would not ſeparate from us *Then*, like thoſe *Idolaters* in *Iſaiah*, with a *Stand farther off, come not near to us, for we are holier than you*; But rather, like the *Lepers* under the *Law of Leproſie*, would cover their faces with Confuſion, and ſtand aloof from God's Houſe, *accuſing themſelves of their Uncleanneſs*: or, like the Περσκλαίοντες & Ὑποπίπτοντες in the Primitive Times of Diſcipline, falling down flat upon their faces, (not in the *Church*, but the *Churchyard*, at an humble Diſtance,) would beg the Charity of *Their* Prayers whom they ſaw *entring* into God's Houſe at the Times of Prayer. Were they ſuch *Separatiſts* as *Theſe*, and from ſuch a Principle as *This*, from the exceſſes onely of *Meekneſs*, and not of *Pride*, we ſhould receive them with the Embraces of *Arms* and *Hearts*; we ſhould

Luk. 7. 6.

Iſa. 65. 2, 5.

Lev. 13. 45, 46.

readily afford them even the *Right hand of Fellowship*; we should conclude *the Holy Ghost* had so descended upon their *Souls*, as once he did upon the *Heads* of the 12 *Apostles*, or rather upon the *Hearts* of *those* 3000 who at S. *Peter*'s one Sermon were *added to them:* Though not in the *Edifying Gifts* which were bestowed upon the *former*, yet in the *Sanctifying Graces* which were infused into the *latter*.

Act. 2. 41.

§ 12. But having spoken enough already of *Trying the Spirits* in *other* men, I think it fit to say something of *Trying* them also in *our selves*. For considering the words of the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The Heart of man is deceitfull above all things*; and that 'tis given to very *few*, (few, I mean, in comparison,) to *know what Spirits they are of*; I guess it concerns us all in general, and every one of us in particular, to resume the whole Text, and bring it home unto our selves; to *search and try* our own Hearts, and to *examin* our own Spirits, *whether or no they are of God*. 'Twas the Precept of *Pythagoras* to every man of his Sect, that he should bring himself to the Test, or call himself to an Accompt, every Evening of his whole Life, with a Πῆ παρέβω; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη; what he had *done* in That Day which he ought to have *omitted*, and what good thing he had *omitted* which 'twas his Duty to have *done*: Nor was he to suffer himself to *sleep*, till he had made up this Reckoning *three several Times*. So 'twas the Precept of S. *Paul*, in his 2d *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, *Examin your*

Μήθ' ὕπνον ὀφθαλμοῖς δοῦναι, πρὶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

your ſelves whether ye be in the Faith: (meaning *That Faith which does work by Love* all manner of Obedience to the Law of *Chriſt*'s Goſpel:) ἑαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε, *prove* or *try* your *own ſelves*, whether ye have not yet *received* the True Faith of *Chriſt*; or whether, having once received, ye ſtill *retain* it. *Know ye not your own ſelves how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates?* So S. *Paul* reaſon'd with his *Corinthians*; and ſo muſt we *with* or *within* our ſelves. Know we not that *Chriſt* is in us, by the *Preſence* of his *Spirit?* and by the *Power* of his *Word?* and by the evident *effects* of His *Operation?* Such as our Sorrow for our ſins paſt, our hatred of our ſelves in Remembrance of them, and our ſtedfaſt Reſolutions of better life? Know we not that *Chriſt* is in us by ſuch Evidences as Theſe? If we *do*, Then let us treat him in ſuch a manner, as may become ſo *Divine a Gueſt*. But if we do not, we have ſome reaſon to fear, leſt we have ſinn'd-away our Saviour, as arrant *Reprobates* and *Caſtaways*; as men *unworthy* to be call'd *Chriſtians*; as men who either are not at all *Regenerate*, or elſe are *fallen* from That State of Regeneration which we were in; or (to expreſs it with S. *Paul*) as men who have *received the Grace of God in vain.* And as it concerns us on *all* occaſions to *try* the Spirit which is in us, whether 'tis a *good*, or an *evil* Spirit; ſo moſt eſpecially does it concern us at ſuch a Time as This is, when we Tread in God's Courts, to offer up the Goſpel-ſacrifice of Supplication and Thankſgiving; to hear

hear His Word,& to partake of his Sacraments. (Duties equally belonging to the first Sunday of the month.) For the *Bread* of God's *Children* must not be cast unto *the Dogs*; and the Food which is *Spiritual* belongs to *Them onely* who can *spiritually discern* it, and who *live not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* I do not mean after *every Spirit*, (for there are *many more than good*, as I shew'd before,) but after The *Spirit that is of God*; The Spirit of *Holiness*, and *Truth*; The Spirit of *Unity*, and *Love*; The Spirit of *Meekness*, and of *Order*; The Spirit of *Singleness*, and *Sincerity*; The Spirit of *Wisdom*, and *Understanding*; The Spirit of *Counsel*, and *Ghostly Strength*; The Spirit of *Knowledge*, and *true Godliness*; and lastly, The Spirit of *God's Holy Fear*; (as the divine Prophet *Isaiah* expresseth him *resting upon Christ*, of whom the good King *Hezekiah* was but *a Type* in That place.) Unto all which if I should add, *The Spirit of Promise*, (with S. *Paul*,) and *The Spirit of Prophecy* (with S. *John*,) *The Spirit of Grace*, (with holy *Zachary*,) and *The Spirit of Glory*, (with S. *Peter*,) I should but say, *The same Spirit*, in the vindicating of whom from the many *False Spirits*, which (in this last Age especially) have been *debauching* the Christian World, I have imploy'd the little Time which is *allow'd* for this Part of our *Morning Service.*

Isa. 11. 2.

Eph. 1. 13. Rev. 19. 10. Zech. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

To *Him* therefore with *The Father* in their Unity with *The Son*, Sing we *Hosannahs*, and *Hallelujahs*, *Blessing*, *Glory*, *Honour*, *and Power*, *To Him that liveth for evermore.*

OF

The exceeding Sinfulneſs

OF

SCHISM;

In how many

GREAT REGARDS

It is worſe than

HÆRESIE;

AND

Why more damning than other Crimes.

---

2 THESS. 3. 6.

Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye withdraw your ſelves from every Brother that walketh diſorderly.

§ 1. A TEXT exciting us to a Duty which does equally *invite* and *command* Attention. For the Duty is introduced with as *important* an *Obteſtation*, as is any-where us'd in

S. *Paul's* Epiſtles: and it muſt certainly be a matter of exceeding great moment, which could extort from our Apoſtle ſo *great* and *ſignal* an *Obteſtation*. He calls us *Brethren*, (for we are now in the place of the *Theſſalonians*,) to win *our* Love, and to ſhew his *own*. But withall he *commands* us, as God's *Embaſſador*, that he may make as good impreſſion upon our *Fear* too. We may take his whole Meaning in This plain Paraphraſe.

Παραγγέλλομεν, *We charge you*, and that by virtue of our Commiſſion, or in the power of our Apoſtleſhip, *in the name* and the behalf, by the Bowells and the Authority of *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as ye will anſwer it at the great and terrible Day of Diſcrimination, *the Day wherein the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power*; by *every thing* that is *dreadfull*, or *dear* unto you, παραγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, we *declare*, we *denounce*, we *command* you, Brethren, that if ye obſerve any *Profeſſor* of the *Chriſtian Religion* (who for that reaſon onely is call'd a *Brother*) to

2 Theſſ. 1. 7, 8, 9.

to forſake his proper *Calling*, his *Place* and *Station*, and to meddle *as a Buiſybody* in other mens Matters, (*v.* 11.) and ſo to caſt off all Obedience to the Rules of Direction which we have given; (eſpecially if ye obſerve him to leap from the *Shop* into the *Pulpit*, or out of the *Church* into a *Synagogue* conſiſting of the moſt *factious* and diſorderly *Opiniators*, who, under colour of *ſerving God*, *deſpiſe* the Ordinances of *Men*;) ye preſently *Note* him, and *mark him out*, as a *Diſorderly Walker*, as a *Diſturber* of *Society*, as a *Diſſeminator* of *Diſcords*, the very *Bane* of all *Religion*, and the *Diſcredit* of *Chriſtianity*; moſt *unworthy* to be *admitted* to any Commerce or *Converſation* with *regular* Chriſtians; but to be *ſhunn'd* like any *Leper*, and to be *caſt out* of your *Company*, as if he had a *Plague-ſore*. (*v.* 14.)

Thus I *paraphraſe* the Text, as I find it relating to the Context; and by comparing our *Apoſtle*'s with our *Saviour*'s own Rule. For ἀτάκτως περιπατῶν, *A Brother walking diſorderly*, in this preſent verſe, does ſeem to be the ſame *unruly* and *irregular* Perſon, who is expreſſed by the word ἀτάκτοις 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 14. Which being a *Military* expreſſion, and of peculiar uſe in *Tacticks*, does properly ſignifie *a Souldier*

who runs away from his Colours; quits the *Service* he undertook and *ingaged* in; denies obedience to his *Commander*; not onely to his *Lieutenant*, but *Captain-General*; (that is to ſay, without a *Metaphor*,) depraves the *Doctrin*, diſturbs the *Diſciplin*, diſowns the *Government* of the Church: By any one of which Three he is *diſorderly* in his *Walking*, however they are commonly all Three in one.

§ 2. Now when a *Brother*, (that is) a *Chriſtian*, (at leaſt in Profeſſion and Pretenſe,) is ſo *diſorderly* in his *Walking*, as that he will not *hear the Church*, but is a *Contemner of Authority*, and *Publick Order*; He is, by the *Rule* of our Bleſſed *Saviour*, to be look'd upon and dealt with, juſt as **Heathen-men and Publicans* were look'd upon and dealt with amongſt the *Jews*: We muſt *avoid* him, as a *prophane* and an *impious* perſon; as one who is *void of all Religion*, and as it were *without God in the World*. Thus we muſt *brand* and *ſtigmatize* him for two *good Reaſons*, and *pious Ends*: firſt, that *himſelf* may be *aſham'd*, and being aſham'd may be *converted*; (2 *Theſſ.* 3. 14.) next, that *others alſo may* **fear* to *doe*, and *ſuffer*, by his *Example*.

* Matth. 18. 17.

* 1 Tim. 5. 20.

§ 3. That *This* was the meaning of *our Lord*, (*Matth.* 18. 17.) ſeems to me very evident from

Two

Two especially of his *Apostles*; I mean, the *most learned*, and *most beloved*. They tell us *Both*, that when a *Brother* is become *contumacious*, and not reclaimable either by *private*, or by *publick* Admonitions, we must not onely not *religiously*, but not so much as *civilly* entertain commerce with him. We must *not* * *eat* with such a Brother, or *keep him company*; must not * *receive him into our Houses, or bid him God speed*. And there is *reason* for this *Severity*, which S. *Paul* and S. *John* have thus *injoyn'd* us. For can there be any thing more *apposite*, more *pertinent*, or *proper*, than to deny *them* our Company in *private* Houses, who disdain to afford us their own in *God's*? Why should we *eat and drink* with *Them*, either at *Their*, or *Our Tables*, who are therefore *too unworthy*, because they *think* they are too *Good*, to *eat and drink* in *our* company at the *Table of the Lord?* Why should we any-where go with *Them*, who will not go with *Us* to *Heaven*; and *hate* the *means* of *Salvation*, so far forth as *we injoy* them? Is it any way consistent either with *Charity*, or *Reason*, that we should *bid a man God speed* in the *ways* of *Corah*; or *affect* his *Society*, who *hates* our *Religion*, and our *God?* No, he is rather (says our Apostle) *to be put away from us, and from among us*;

* 1 Cor. 5. 11.

* 2 Joh. 10.

1 Cor. 5. 2. & 13.

us, (as a foul, peſtilential, accurſed thing,) and even *deliver'd up to Satan* by the Cenſures of the Church: although it be to this charitable and wholſome end, *that he may learn not to blaſpheme*; that he may learn to be *conformable* to *Rules* and *Rulers*; and ſo *that his Spirit may be ſaved in the Day of the Lord Jeſus.*

1 Tim. 1. 20.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

§ 4. 'Tis true that *All vicious perſons* are *diſorderly Walkers*, who walk *as far* as they are able from the ſtrait *Path* of God's *Commandments:* and from *All* that are *Scandalous* we are commanded to *withdraw.* For ſo ſaith S. *Paul*, (1 *Cor.* 5. 11.) *I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is call'd a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one no not to eat.* No not in one of your private Houſes, much leſs in the Sacrament, and Houſe of God. But I do not here ſpeak (nor does S. *Paul*) touching abſolute *Apoſtates*, who do renounce and fall away from the *whole Faith* of *Chriſt*, and the very *Profeſſion* of Chriſtianity; becauſe *They* are not ſo much as *call'd*, or *accompted Brethren.* Nor do I ſpeak of *Jews*, or *Heathens*, who, becauſe they are *avow'd* and *open* Enemies of *Chriſt*, may with much the *more ſafety*, or rather with much

much the *leſs danger*, be traffick'd with. (And accordingly S. *Paul* has excepted *Them*, in the very next verſe *before* my Text, and the next verſe *after*.) But I ſpeak of groſs Sinners, on whom *the name of Chriſt is call'd*. And amongſt *Them*, in ſpecial manner, I aim at two ſorts of men who are called *Brethren*; and ſo (like *Judas* downright) do betray the whole *Cauſe* of *Chriſtianity* with a *Kiſs*. I mean the *Hæretick* for one, who breaks the Unity of the Church in point of *Doctrin*, by *denying* one or more of her *Fundamentals*: I mean the *Schiſmatick* for another, who breaks the Unity of the Church in point of *Diſciplin*, by doing as much as in him lies to overthrow her very *Government*, *Laws*, and *Order*. The *Firſt* of Theſe we muſt *reject*, and *withdraw our ſelves from*, in caſe he ſhall not *reform* himſelf, after a couple of *Admonitions*: Tit. 3. 10. Much **more* the *Second*, as the more *Scandalous*, and the more *miſchievous*, and the more *impious* of the two. And being by much the *moſt irregular* of all *diſorderly Walkers* my Text intends, he is the fitter to be the Subject of my Diſcourſe at this Time. For an *Hæretick*, as he is *ſuch*, does onely offend againſt *Faith* and *Truth*; and keeping his Error *to himſelf*, (as very eaſily he may, and very many

* *Nulla ab iis tanta poteſt fieri corruptio, quanta eſt Schiſmatis pernicies.* Iren. l. 4. c. 62.

many there are that do,) ſo as it never ſhall run out, either at his *Tongue's* or his *Finger's* end, is no body's Enemy but his own; is a regular Citizen, and a good Subject, living friendly with his Neighbours, and in an uniform Obedience to his Superiors. Whereas a *Schiſmatick*, as he is *ſuch*, does *alſo* offend againſt *Peace* and *Charity*; and cannot poſſibly keep his Schiſm *unto himſelf*, but needs muſt *hurt others* with it, becauſe 'tis *publick* in its own *Nature*, and cannot be *Schiſm*, unleſs it *be* ſo. For he *ſeparates* himſelf from the *publick Worſhip*; affronts the *Governors*, and ſcorns the *Government* of the Church; cuts himſelf off from the *Communion* of the *Body* of *Chriſt*; ſets up Altar againſt Altar, *Dan* and *Bethel* againſt *Jeruſalem* and *Sion*; ſets up a *Miniſtry* of his *own making*, againſt a *Prieſthood* ordain'd *by God*; abetts a *Conventicle* prohibited by *God* and *Man*, againſt a *Church* ſet apart by the Laws of *Both*; like *Jeroboam* downright, whoſe Sin conſiſted in *This* eſpecially, *that he made Iſrael to Sin.* Now an *active Divider* in and of the Church of God, muſt needs be *worſe* than any other, who is but *paſſively divided* and cut off *from* her. And to deſtroy a *whole Society* by ſubverting the *whole Legiſlative power*, muſt needs be *worſe* than to *violate*

violate a *particular Law.* And That which makes way for *all the Hæreſies in the world*, as well as for *all the Immoralities of life*, (which *Schiſm* does evidently do,) muſt needs be *worſe* than any *Hæreſie*, which does onely make way for *itſelf.* And ſo a *Schiſmatick* is the more *impious*, and the more *miſchievous* of the two. Again, a *Schiſmatick* is *worſe* than a ſimple *Hæretick* as ſuch, not for *this* reaſon onely, becauſe a *vitious Practice* is naturally *worſe* than a *wrong Opinion*; (though that is reaſon great enough;) but for this *other* reaſon alſo, (not ſo commonly obſerv'd as I wiſh it were,) becauſe a *Schiſmatick ipſo facto* is moſtly *an* Hæretick* into the Bargain. For beſides his renouncing the *Ninth Article* of *the Creed*, (that *Form of ſound words* deliver'd to us by *Chriſt*'s Apoſtles,) *The holy Catholick Church*, and *The Communion of Saints*; (duly expounded and underſtood;) I ſay, beſides That, He flatly *deſpiſes*, and *deteſts* (for 'tis a little thing to ſay, he *diſowns*, and *disbelieves*,) That principal *Doctrin of the Goſpel*, That *Fundamental of Chriſtianity*, That great *Eſſential* to All Religion, that we muſt *heartily ſubmit to every Ordinance of Man*; and that as well *for the Lord's ſake*, as for our *own*; nor one-

* Hieron. *ad Tit. c.* 3. See Dr. *Ham.* of Schiſm, *c.* 1. *p.* 7.

1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 15.

* Rom. 13. 5. ly *for fear of Wrath*, but *for* **Conſcience ſake.*

§ 5. Why I chuſe to call This, *a principal Doctrin of the Goſpel, a Fundamental of Chriſtianity*, and the great *Eſſential* to All Religion, I ſeem to my ſelf to have ſo *many* and *great Reaſons*, that if they were every-where *urged*, and *laid to heart*, (eſpecially by the Parties who are the *leaſt aware* of them, but *moſt concern'd* to take them in,) they might *ſuffice* to put an end to thoſe numerous *Schiſms*, which now do *threaten* to put an end to our *whole Religion*. The Doctrin of *Obedience* to humane *Governours* and *Laws*, is certainly the *apteſt* of any other, (next to that of our *Obedience to God himſelf*, whereof this Doctrin is a moſt *neceſſary part* too,) to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*; and to congregate into one Body the moſt disjoynted and ſcatter'd Members in Church and State. A Doctrin laid for this purpoſe by God the Father, from the *Foundations of the World*; and that in the *Law* of the *firſt Creation*. A Doctrin propagated by *Moſes*, as *Taught of God* to teach *others*. A Doctrin *perfected* by *Chriſt*, as by the *Wiſedom* of the *Father*, who *pray'd* his Followers might be *one*, even as his *Father* and *He* were *one*: (*Joh.* 17. 11.) which yet without Obedience to this very Doctrin can never be. A Doctrin inculcated and inforced by God *the Holy Ghoſt*,

Eph. 4. 3.

Ghoſt, as by *the Spirit of Love*, and *Meekneſs*, of *Peace*, and *Union*. A Doctrin extended to *All Authority* upon Earth; not onely *Regal* in the firſt place, (1 *Pet.* 2. 13.) but *Eccleſiaſtical* in the ſecond, (*Heb.* 13. 17.) To ſumme up all in a word, There is not a Doctrin in all the Goſpel, either more *earneſtly*, or more *aſſiduouſly*, either more *plainly*, or more *expreſly* preſcribed to us, (and that under pain of *Damnation* too,) than that of our *uniform Obedience* to *All* that are *over us in Authority*. I ſay, to *All*; not onely to the *Beſt*, (the *Good and Gentle*,) but as well to the *worſt*, and *moſt* **froward* Governours. * 1 Pet. 2. 18.

§ 6. It is not onely moſt *fooliſhly*, but moſt *nefariouſly* pretended, that the *Piety*, or *Impiety*, the *Religion*, or *Irreligion*, of them that are over us in the Lord, can either *widen*, or *contract* our divine *Obligation* to ſtrict Obedience. For never was any *incarnate Devil* more incomparably impious than thoſe Emperours of *Rome*, *Tiberius* and *Nero*; whom yet our *Saviour* and S. *Paul* commanded their *Followers* to *obey*, and *obey'd Themſelves*. For *Obedience* to *Magiſtrates* being *of Divine right*, ſtrongly *founded* upon the *Will* and the *Word* of *God*, and even *a part* of our *Obedience* to *God Himſelf*, (whilſt it is paid to that Authority which God has commanded us to

pay an Obedience to,) cannot poſſibly be due to *the men*, *as men*, or to the *Good*, as they are *Good*; but to the *Magiſtrates* or *Maſters reduplicativè*, as they are *ſuch*: 'Tis due to the Go-
Rom.13.1,2. vernours *as they are Governours*, and as *the Ordinance of God*; let their Practices and Opinions be what they will.

§ 7. 'Tis true, when our *Governours* are *Uſurpers*, or (being *None*) do *command* us what God *forbids*; *There* there lies *an Exception* to our *Obedience*, due to *God*, *rather than Man*. But This *Exception* makes ſtrongly for *all* I have hitherto ſaid; and that by virtue of the old Axiom, *Exceptio firmat Regulam in non exceptis*. So that by this Rule and Reaſon, that when *God* and His *Deputies* do ſtand in *competition* for our *Obedience*, *God* muſt have our *whole Active*, and His *Deputies* our *Paſſive* Obedience onely; It cannot but follow, that when our Governours are *rightfull*, and do *onely command* what *God* does *no-where forbid*, or do *onely forbid* what God does *no-where command* us, *There* we muſt *obey God*, by *obeying Man*: there being *no other way* of paying God our Obedience, in ſuch a caſe. For *There* our *Governours* Command is the Command of *God* too. *There* the very *ſame Law* which is *immediately Humane*, is alſo *mediately Divine*;

Divine; Becauſe we *There* are commanded by *That* Authority upon Earth, which in the Old and New Teſtament *God* has *commanded* us to *obey*. Nor is there *any one Duty*, belonging to us as *Men* or *Chriſtians*, which God is pleas'd to make a ſtricter Proviſion for. We are no more commanded to *fear God*, than to *honour the King:* nor are we more forbidden to *worſhip Idols*, than to *reſiſt* or *diſobey* ſuch as are *over us in Authority*.

§ 8. This I do the rather inſiſt upon, in my Deſign upon the *Welfare* and the *Converſion* of our *Schiſmaticks*, (the moſt *Diſorderly Walkers* of all my Text alludes to, or comprehends in its Importance,) becauſe I can *no more* ſeparate (no not ſo much as in my *Conception*) the Sin of *Schiſm* from *Diſobedience to juſt Authority*, than *Diſobedience* from *Rebellion againſt the Goſpel*, or a *State of Damnation* from *either* of them. They are *all three united* in the *Schiſmaticks* of old, as S. *Jude* deſcribes them. For, ſpeaking in his Epiſtle of *Certain men crept in unawares*, *deſpiſing Dominion*, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, *Clouds without Water carried about of Winds*, *raging Waves of the Sea*, *foaming out their own ſhame*, *wandring Stars*, *to whom is reſerved the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever*; He

Jude 4. 8. 12. 13.

16. proceeds in his Deſcription to call them *Mur-*
murers, *Complainers*, *Walking after their own*
19. *Luſts*, *Separating themſelves* [from the Church Eſtabliſh'd,] and pretending to have, but indeed *having not the Spirit.* This is S. *Jude*'s Hypotypoſis or Deſcription of the *Gnoſticks*, who were the *firſt* and *worſt Schiſmaticks*, the *firſt* and *worſt Hæreticks*, the *firſt* and *worſt Rebels* in the Primitive Church; the *firſt* who *ſeparated themſelves* upon this account, that they *thought* themſelves *perfecter* and *purer* Chriſtians than others were; the *firſt* who preached up *Chriſtian Liberty* to conſiſt in an *Exemption* from all Authority upon Earth, from all Superiours whatſoever, whether *Maſters*, or *Kings*, or *Apoſtles and Governours of the Church*; The *firſt* we meet with in all the Goſpel match'd and parallel'd (for *wickedneſs*) with *Cain* and *Core*, yea with *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, yea with Thoſe *Schiſmaticks in Heaven, the Angels that kept not their firſt Eſtate, but left their own Habitation*, (v. 6.) and were *thrown* headlong by their *Schiſm* from Heaven to Hell; Briefly, the *firſt* in the *New* Teſtament, who are *ſet forth for an Example*, (as *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were in the *Old*,) of *ſuffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire*, (therein *tormented day and night for ever and ever*,

ever, Rev. 20. 10.) And so they are parallel'd (for their *Misery*, as well as *Sin*,) with them that *separated* themselves from the *Church Triumphant*; *reserved* therefore by the Judge *in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.* In all this S. *Jude* agrees exactly with S. *Paul*, (1 *Tim.* 6. 3,4,5.) and *as* exactly with S. *Peter*, (in his whole 2d Chapter of his 2d Epistle,) as if the *one* had taken Notes out of the *other*. No less terrible are the Expressions of the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*, concerning such as *persevere* in the Sin of *Schism*, *Heb.* 10. 23,25. to v. 30. where They that do not *hold fast the Profession of the Faith without wavering*, (v. 23.) but *forsake the Assembling of themselves together*, (at the Stated Times and Places by just Authority appointed,) *as the manner of some is*, (v. 25.) are inferr'd to *sin wilfully, after they have received the knowledge of the Truth*, (v. 26.) and *there remains nothing for such, but a certain fearfull looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation*, (v. 27.)

Jude 6.

§ 9. Nor indeed is it a wonder that the *Holy Ghost's Penmen* and *Amanuenses* should set themselves, as 'twere on purpose, to *terrifie* Schismaticks from their Schisms, and to *persuade* them into Conformity, by shewing the *Terrours of the Lord*;

2 Cor. 5. 11.

Lord; by thundering out Damnation, more to *That* ſingle Sin, than to all the reſt: For a *wilfull* and a *Groundleſs Separation from the Catholick and Apoſtolick Church*, or *from a National Church onely, which is a true Part of the Univerſal*, (ſuch as is the Church of *England*, where nothing ſinfull is required as the Condition of our Communion,) whether by *Breach of that Communion* in which a man ought to have *continu'd*, or by a *Refuſal* of that Communion which'tis his Duty to *be of*, (and that as well by *Divine* as by *humane* Laws,) is ſo infinitely far from *walking orderly*, or *according to the Tradition we have received* of S. *Paul*, (that is, according to the *Rule* of a *Chriſtian Life*, *deliver'd* to us in the *Scriptures*,) that'tis to give the *greateſt Scandal* which can be given to *Chriſt's Enemies*, and tends to make the *whole Goſpel* of *none effect*. It helps to *juſtifie* the *Turks*, the *Jews*, and *Gentiles*, in the *Præjudices* they have to the *Chriſtian Name*. It helps to *harden* them in their *hatreds*, and even tacitly *forbids* them to be *Believers*. 'Tis true that Hæreſie and Schiſm do ſo *agree* in one *generical* Signification, that *Hæreſie is Schiſm* in point of *Doctrin*, and *Schiſm is Hæreſie* in point of *Uſe*. But they are ſo very *different* in their *ſpecifical* acceptions, that *Schiſm* is

is many ways the *worse*, as I said before. And if S. *Paul* by the word *Hæresies* does *not signifie them *Both*, it follows that *Hæresie* of *itself* is rank'd with *Hatred*, *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Murthers*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. And then how damning a Sin is *Schism*, whereof *Hæresie* is but a *Part*, as I shew'd before? *This* is also there reckon'd among the *Works of the Flesh*. For *Hatred*, *Variance*, *Emulations*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Seditions*, what are they all, but several *Members* or *Concomitants* of *Schism*? implying *Schism* to be a *System* or *Body* of Sin *epitomiz'd*. S. *Paul* accordingly speaks of *Schism*, as of a *complicated Carnality*, which (like the proverbial *Trojan Horse*) carries an *Army* of Impieties within its Bowels. 'Twas *That* (by way of *eminence*) S. *Paul accused*, of having made his *Corinthians carnal*. And the Character which is given to the *Double-minded man* (*Jam.* 1. 8.) belongs as well to the *Schismatical* or *Carnal-minded* man, that he is *unstable in all his ways*. For such exactly is the *Schismatick* by way of *peculiarity*; who having faln from his *Center*, [The Church of God,] knows not after *where* to *fix*; but wanders about from Sect to Sect, from Party to Party, from Hæresie to Hæresie, from Schism to Schism, and *so* indeed does *try*

* Note that διχοστασίαι placed after αἱρέσεις may well signifie *Schisms*, because the word is so taken *Rom.* 16. 17. and because *Schisms* are a kind of *Ecclesiastical Seditions*.

1 Cor. 3. 3, 4.

all things, (in a moſt *perverſe* and *peeviſh* ſenſe,) as never to *hold faſt what is good*. *Experience* is the *Miſtriſs* by which we have been *taught This*. (I mean the *wofull Experience* of Six and Thirty years old.) And we are moſt prodigious *Dunces*, if after ſo many years *Inſtruction* in the *School* of *Affliction* and *Experience*, we are no whit the wiſer for ſuch a *Leſſon*. For *what* things are there in Holy Writ, (how eſſential ſoever to Chriſtianity,) which have not been *queſtion'd*, and *diſputed*, if not *deny'd*, and *rejected*, ſince *Schiſm* took place in the *Chair of Scorn?* To *this alone* we owe the *raging* of the *Sea*, and the *roaring* of the *Waves*, whereby the *Madneſs* of the *People* is oft expreſs'd. To *this alone* we owe the *Legion*, I do not ſay onely of *Creeds*, of *Religioſities*, of *Dogmatizings* here in *England*, (ſince the year 41. in eſpecial manner,) but even of *Skepticiſm*, *Apoſtaſy*, and of *Atheiſm* it ſelf.

§ 10. Now if any are deſirous to know the *Reaſons*, why our *Schiſmaticks*, rather than *others*, (however Scandalous in their lives,) are *ſingl'd out* from the whole *Herd* of Notorious Sinners, to be *paradigmatiz'd* as *diſorderly Walkers*, from whom we are **moſt* to *withdraw ourſelves*; I ſhall endeavour their Satisfaction by theſe

* *Pejus hoc crimen eſt, quàm quod admiſiſſe Lapſi videntur.* Cyprian. *de Unitate Eccleſiæ.* ——καὶ ἐμὲ δὲ μείζων—— Euſeb. *l.* 6. *c.* 36.

theſe 4 Reaſons. Firſt, becauſe of all Sinners, *They* ſeem to be the moſt *deſtitute* of Chriſtian *Meekneſs* and *Humility*. Next, becauſe of all Sinners, *they* are the moſt *void* of Chriſtian *Charity*, as That is Superiour to *Faith* and *Hope*. Thirdly, becauſe of all Sinners, *they* are the greateſt *Underminers* of *Society* and *Government*; the greateſt *Adverſaries* to *God*, as *the God of Order*; the greateſt *Diſturbers* (and the moſt *dangerous*) of private *Propriety*, and publick *Peace*. Laſtly, becauſe of all Sinners, our Schiſmaticks here in *England* are the moſt barbarouſly *ingratefull*, and moſt deplorably *unexcuſable* of any other. I am very much miſtaken, if I have not great reaſon for theſe 4 Reaſons. But whether ſo, or not ſo, I leave to the *Judgment* of my *Superiours*; and content my ſelf with This, that (without any paſſion) I ſpeak mine *own*. 1. 2. 3. 4.

§ 11. To the *firſt* of my 4 Reaſons I premiſe S. *Paul*'s Character touching Schiſmaticks in general; to wit, that *they conſent not to wholſome words, and the Doctrin which is according to Godlineſs; but are proud, knowing nothing, doat about Queſtions, and Strifes of words, whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railings, evil Surmiſes, perverſe Diſputings of men of corrupt Minds, and* 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

deſtitute of the Truth. From ſuch (ſays he to *Timothy*) *withdraw thy ſelf.* S. *Peter* adds, 2 Pet. 2. 10, 15. *They are preſumptuous, ſelfwill'd, deſpiſe Government, have forſaken the right Path, and are gone aſtray.* Now from Scripture thus ſpeaking, let us *reaſon* the caſe a little, and then *apply* it. Can any be *farther* from *Humility*, than *They* who *know nothing*, and yet are *proud* of their *Knowledge?* Can any *Pride* be more *prodigious*, than that by which the very *baſeſt* and the moſt *deſpicable* of *Subjects* do not onely *abhor*, but *deſpiſe* their *Governeurs?* nor onely the *Perſons*, who are but *Men*, but even *Government it ſelf*, which is avowedly *Divine* in its Inſtitution? The Apoſtle's Expreſſion is *rich* and *elegant*, as well as *true.* For to *deſpiſe*, or *contemn*, to *depretiate* and *ſcorn*, and as it were to *look down upon* Thoſe *above* us, does not ſavour of a *vulgar*, or of a *middle-ſiz'd* Pride, but of *Pride in its Exaltation.* Can any *Pride* be more *monſtrous*, than for vile *Duſt and Aſhes* even to *Deifie It ſelf?* yet the *Schiſmatick* ſeems to doe it in Three reſpects. For firſt, he arrogates to himſelf God's *Incommunicable Attribute*, whilſt he founds his groſſeſt *Errours* upon an *Infallibility:* which he does not onely aſcribe (as *others* do with more modeſty, and *ſhew* of Reaſon,)

Reaſon, although 'tis no more than a *ſhew* of Reaſon,) to the *whole*, either *diffuſive*, or *repreſentative Church*; but to his *own individual* Perſon, *acted* (forſooth) and *over-acted* by That which he calls (ſpeaking out of his own Heart) the *infallible Spirit of God*. In any Controverſie ariſing touching the ſenſe of any Scripture, He does not appeal to the *Original*, or *Context*, to *Fathers*, or *Councils*, or *Commentators*, (all *riff-raff* in *his* Eſteem,) but to *Illumination*, and *Revelation*, and The *Teſtimony within him*. Nor can I imagin what ſhould keep him from *returning* into the Church he has turned from, unleſs it be the *worſt Effect* of the *greateſt Pride*, a *ſhamefulneſs* to *confeſs* he has *ever err'd*. Next he *Deifies himſelf* by not enduring *God's Yoke*, or indeed that *God* ſhould *reign* over him. For if *the Powers that are* on Earth *are ordain'd by God*, (as S. *Paul* affirms,) it is evident that we live under a Θεοκρατία; that God, by *Them*, does *reign over us*: and *they that reſiſt ſhall receive Damnation*, becauſe they *will not be under God*. This is certainly *at the Bottom* both of S. *Jude*'s, and S. *Paul*'s, and S. *Peter*'s reaſonings, when they infer *eternal Torments* (as they every-where do) from *Diſobedience* to the Authorities, and the *lawfull* Commands of *Men*. Beſides, the *Schiſ-*

matick ſeems to *Deifie himſelf*, by *ſeating* himſelf on the *Throne* of *God*, and undertaking to be *the Judge* of Quick and Dead; by *opening* the *Seals* of the *Book of life*; and expounding God's *Decrees* of Particular mens States *from all Eternity*. He takes upon him before the Harveſt, to ſever the Wheat from the Tares, and the Sheep from the Goats. He forſooth, and his Party, and none beſides, are the *Elect*; whilſt *all* from whom they All *ſeparate*, are Veſſels of *Wrath* and *Reprobation*. Again, how *far* is That Profeſſor from *Chriſtian Meekneß*, who ſays as the *Schiſmaticks* did of old, in the Prophet *Eſa*. *Stand farther off, come not near me, for I am holier than Thou? thanking God that he is not as other men are*, neither a *Sabbath-breaker*, nor *Swearer*, nor even as this or that *Publican*; no *Conformiſt*, no *Royaliſt*, nor even as this or that *Excize-man*, gathering Tribute-money for *Cæſar*: and proudly taking to his *Party* the name of *Saints* at every turn, which he *denies* to the *Apoſtles* in all Diſcourſe he makes of them on all occaſions. Briefly, for a Perſon of very *low Parts*, and little Learning, of contemptible Education, and ſmall Improvements, to ſeparate from a Great and Admired Church, *The Church of England*, and from the *Devo-*

Iſa. 65. 5.

Devotions of the ſame in her Publick *Liturgy*, All contrived by the *Wiſedom*, directed by the *Learning*, embraced by the *Piety*, eſtabliſhed by the *Authority* of ſuch a Nation, confirmed by at leaſt 33 Acts of Parliament, and by as many Convocations, or Repreſentatives of the Clergy, ſign'd and ſeal'd by the *Sufferings* of many *Confeſſors* and *Martyrs*, laſtly, aſſerted and defended againſt the Wit and the Malice of all Opponents; I ſay, for a perſon groſly *ignorant*, and *knowing nothing* in compariſon, to *ſcorn* or *pity* all his *Teachers*, as *Fools and Blind*; for him to *think* he *ſees* more or better, than the *two Univerſities* put together, commonly call'd the *two Eyes* of this National *Body*, (which is as if the *ſillieſt Sheep* that ever *leap'd* out of a *Fold*, ſhould take upon them both to *guide* and to *feed* their *Shepherd*;) This does argue ſuch an *Arrogance*, *Self-conceitedneſs*, and *Pride*, as no Rhetorick can expreſs, no Charity excuſe, no Humility not cenſure. Although *Novatus* was made a *Schiſmatick* by a *proud opinion* of his own *Purity*, and by his carnal *Ambition* to *head a Party*, as *Simon Magus* did the *Gnoſticks* in the Apoſtles own Times, on the ſame account; yet now the *Copy* and *Tranſlation* has *ſo outdone* its *Original*, that *our* Schiſmaticks

maticks *have accus'd the Laws and Canons* (for *Uniformity*) of being *Such*. They could approve of moſt things, in caſe they were not *impos'd* by *Law*. The very Reaſon why they *ought*, is the Reaſon they *will not* ſerve God in order. They dare not doe what they know they may lawfully, for fear they ſhould *ſeem* to think an human Law binding. The *onely fault* of our Liturgy, is its having been *compos'd*, *Authoriz'd*, and *made uſe of*, by the *wiſeſt* and the *Beſt* of our Engliſh World, eſpecially by the *Governours* in Church and State. They will have *Parliaments* and *Synods* ſtrike ſail to *Them*. Whatſoever is *Great* or *Sacred* is marked out for the object of *their Contempt*. Unleſs *Antiquity* and *Authority* will *condeſcend* and *ſtoop* to them, yea unleſs they may *tread* upon *Crowns* and *Scepters*, there is not any thing will *pleaſe* them, or give them *reſt*. Forſooth They want a main part of their *Chriſtian Liberty*, unleſs they may not onely be ſuffer'd to *caſt away their Cords from them*, but alſo to *bind their Kings in Chains, and their Nobles with links of Iron*.

Pſal. 149. 8.

§ 12. Nor are our *Schiſmaticks* onely arriv'd at the *Top* of *Pride*, (which is my *firſt* reaſon,) but they are alſo ſunk down even *below* the very

very *Bottom* of *Christian Charity*, (which is my *second.*) For *Charity thinketh no evil*, but our *Schismaticks nothing else.* They cannot *see* their *own Eyes*, much less the *Beams* that are in them; but in the *Eye* of a *Conformist* they can see every *Mote*, and easily *look it* into a *Mountain.* They perfectly *hate*, whomsoever they have *injur'd* for being *blameless*; that is, for refusing to walk with *Them* in the *ways of Corah:* And if we strive to *doe all things* (in the publick worship of God) with any *Decency or Order*, as S. *Paul* and our Governours do strictly bind us; they pretend to see nothing, (such is the *yellow*, or *black Jaundise* of *Malignity and Prejudice*,) but either *Popery* or *Paganism* in all our Service. Hence they *separate* from *us*, (though not *Christians* onely, but *Protestants*,) with no less aversion (in all appearance,) than from *Papists*, and *Pagans*, and *Limbs of Satan.* Nor can they rationally deny, that they esteem us *as bad* as either: for if they judge not *our Communion* to be as *absolutely Unlawfull*, as they do their *own Communion* to be of *absolute Necessity* to their Salvation, they cannot separate from *us*, and *excuse themselves* at the same time. They will not *pretend* they are *unwilling* to *go to Heaven* in *our Company*; but that they *leave* us as

1 Cor. 13. 5.

going on in the *way to Hell.* This muſt needs be their meaning, or elſe they cannot excuſe *themſelves unto themſelves.* So as they muſt be *void of Charity* by either ſide of the Dilemma. For either they really *do* believe us to be as well their *fellow-Saints* as their *fellow-Subjects*, or they *do not:* truly if they do *not*, they then are *void* of all Charity to *Us*, in *thinking* nothing but *evil* of us; not the *beſt* our Caſe will *bear*, but the *worſt* to be imagin'd. And (on the other ſide) if they *do*, they are at the leaſt as *void* of *Charity* to *Themſelves*, and do *deſpiſe* their *own Souls*, by *excommunicating themſelves* from their *fellow-Saints.* For what Pretenſe can they have for their ſeparating from *us*, if they think us *Chriſt's Members*, as well as *They?* The terrible Saying of S. *Cyprian*, [that *Martyrdom is not ſufficient to make amends for a man's Schiſm*,] is as true, as 'tis notorious, and as rational, as 'tis true. And yet it can be neither, unleſs it be on this Ground, that *Schiſm* is *excluſive* of *Chriſtian Charity:* on which ſuppoſal S. *Cyprian* did ſtrongly argue out of S. *Paul. Though I ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, though I have the Gift of Prophecy, Faith, and Knowledge, though I beſtow all my Goods to feed the Poor*, laſtly, *though* (by Martyrdom) *I give*

Etſi tales occiſi in Confeſſione nominis fuerint, Macula iſta nec ſanguine abluitur; Inexpiabilis culpa Diſcordiæ, nec paſſione purgatur. Cyprian. *de unit. Eccl.* 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3.

I give my Body to be burnt, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing. But if I live in *Schism*, I have *no Charity*; because I separate my self (as from the Children of the Devil) from many Thousands of thousands better *Men*, better *Christians*, better *Protestants* than my self. And so my *Alms* in that case are but *Ostentation:* my yielding up my self to be *burnt alive*, is a *mad* kind of *Martyrdom* in such a Case; 'tis but a *Sacrifice* to my *Humour*, to my *Obstinacy*, and *Stomack*, like that of *Clement* and *Ravilliac*, who died Martyrs to the *Popedom*, and not to *Christ*; or like the Martyrdom of *Hierocles*, who writ a Book against *Christ*, and after That at *Byzantium* died a Martyr to his *Stoicism*, as our *English Regicides* to their *Fanaticism*, and *Vanninus* to his *Atheism*. Those alone were the *Deities* which they *ador'd*, and *died for*. 'Tis not the *Bravery* of the *Sufferer*, but the *Divinity* of the *Cause*, which makes a Martyrdom *meritorious* (if any properly can be such) in any measure: and so S. *Cyprian* said rightly, (being but rightly understood,) that even *Martyrdom cannot expiate the Sin of Schism.*

§ 13. Thirdly, *Schism* is *destructive*, (in its *Tendency* at least,) not onely of *Government*, wheresoever there *is any*; but of *Society itself*,

upon a ſuppoſal that there is *none*. Every body knows, (as well as *Machiavel*,) that to *divide*, is to *infeeble*, and ſo the very ſhorteſt way to *deſtroy* a Nation. The *Church* of *England* is but *one*, and in its *Unity* lies its *Safety*, becauſe its *Strength*. But *many* and *many* are the *Sects*, which *Schiſm* has made by *dividing* from her; and ſo it is a *Devil* whoſe name is *Legion*. For the *effects* of which Legion, we ſhall not need conſult more, than our own *Memories* and *Experience*. For from the year 41 till 60, all our National Calamities *began* in *Schiſm*; in *Schiſm* they *continued*; and if ever they are *completed*, 'twill be in *Schiſm* too. *Schiſm* was *ours*, as it was *Corah*'s firſt Crime. For though *Mutiny* and *Rebellion* were the natural *Iſſue* of it, (as *Schiſm* in the *Church* does ever carry *Faction* in the *State* along with it;) yet 'twas chiefly as a **Schiſmatick*, that *Corah* was ſwallow'd up alive, and his *ſeparate Congregation* together with him. 'Twas *Schiſm* which did ſet up The *Aſſembly of Divines*, againſt our regular *Convocations* and *National Synods* of the Clergy. 'Twas That that ſet up the *Directory*, againſt the *Liturgy* of the *Church*. 'Twas *Schiſm* made *Sacrilege*, and a *Sale* of the *Crown-Lands*, and kill'd *God's Anointed* in *order* to it. But for

* Optatus *l.* 1. *p.* 25.

for *Schism*, we had not heard either of *Plunder*, or *Sequestration*; the sound of those Names had never reach'd our English Ears. 'Twas *Schism* call'd *Strength the Law of Justice*. 'Twas *Schism* which founded all *Right* in *Dominion*, and *Right of Dominion* onely in *Grace*; and so (by their Doctrin of irrespective and necessitating Decrees,) inferr'd the Great *Turk* to have *much more Grace* than our *Christian Princes*, because *more Right*, by *more Dominion*. Finally, *Schism* was the *Dam* of all the *Blasphemies*, both of *those* and the *present* Times. The *Leviathan* itself was but the *Spawn* of That *Parent*. Behind the Veil of *Toleration*, which *Schism begot* too, and under the Protection of *Christian Liberty*, which *Schism expounded* into what we now see it, Horrid *Ochlocracy*, and *Chirocracy*, and ugly *Anarchy itself*, has been *hatching*, or *ingendring*, ever since *Monarchy* was restor'd. For some are longing after the *Onions* and the *Flesh-pots* of *Ægypt*, as much as ever. And as we have liv'd to see a *Triumph* without a *War*, or a *Skirmish*, (in the most happy Resuscitation of God's *Spouse*, and his *Vicegerent*;) so do we live to see a *War* too, within the Bowells of Church and State, without other *Weapons* than those of *Schism*. For our *Schismaticks* are an *Army*,

however yet *without Arms*. Happy we, that they are ſo; and moſt unhappy, if they are otherwiſe. For hardly ever were there *Schiſmaticks* (in any Part or Age of the Chriſtian World) without this *Turkiſh* and *Popiſh* Principle, that *Religion* is to be *propagated* (where 'tis poſſible) by the *Sword*.

§ 14. Laſtly, our *Schiſmaticks* here in *England* are of all others the moſt *ingratefull*, and *unexcuſable* in their *Schiſm*. The moſt *ingratefull*; becauſe by Thoſe very *Laws*, and under the Protection of thoſe *Legiſlators*, which they *hate*, and *deſpiſe*, and *conſpire againſt*, they hold the greateſt Injoyments that men are capable of on Earth; to wit, their *Liberties*, and their *Safeties*, their *Livelihoods*, and their *Lives*. Again, the moſt *unexcuſable*; becauſe they cannot but *know*, yea they cannot but *acknowledge*, (and their *Chieftains* do it in *Print*,) that we are *Chriſtians*, and *Proteſtants*, which they alſo pretend to *be*: that we have *all* the *Fundamentals* (which they pretend alſo to have) of the *true Religion*; whether as it conſiſteth of *Faith*, or *Practice*: we own the *Creed*, and the *Commandments*, and the *whole Word of God*, as *all* (or *moſt* of) our Schiſmaticks *pretend* to *doe*. We agree in *all Eſſentials* with *All the Proteſtant* Churches

Churches of *Christendom*, as The *Harmony of Confessions* will convince every Creature who will but *read* them. Whence then the *Murmurings* and *Disputings* (against Authoritative Commands) so strictly *forbidden* by S. *Paul*, *Philip.* 2. 14? or what *excuse* can be found for a *Separation*? Let us examin the whole Affair from Top to Bottom; and let us consider what they would have to make us worthy of their Society; and why they separate from *Us* of the *Church of England*, as from *Papists*, if not *Pagans*, and *Brands of Hell*, as I said before. 'Tis plain, we do not worship *Idols*; and 'tis plain, we have *none* to worship. We *add no Articles* of our making to the Apostles own *Creed*, (as we know who do.) Nor do we *pare away* one of the Ten Commandments, and *slit* another in the *midst*, to complete the number. Nor do we equal the *Apocrypha* with the *Canonical* Books of *Scripture*. We have but *two Sacraments*; and *pray* in *English*. *Wives* are permitted to our *Clergy*; and by Them to the *Laity* the *Cup of Blessing*. We do not *buy* and *sell Pardons*; nor do we trust in any *Merits* save those of *Christ*. We pray for none at all who are departed this Life; and much less *to* them. We *renounce* the strange Doctrin of *Tran-*

Tranſubſtantiation, as we do all Pretenſions to *Infallibility upon Earth*. If we yield the Biſhop of *Rome* a naked *Primacy of Order*, we do refuſe him at the ſame Inſtant all *Supremacy of Power*; and do *limit* his Juriſdiction within his own own *Diœceſe*, or *Province*. Then what *Pretenſe* can any have, (who are *not Papalins Themſelves*,) to *dread*, or *hate* a *Communion* with us? If ſome things *indifferent*, and *uncommanded* in Holy Writ, do make them *ſeparate* from *us* of the Church of *England*, They muſt not onely ſeparate (for the very ſame reaſon) from *all the Reformed* Churches of *Europe*; but they muſt *ſeparate* from *Themſelves* too, and from their *ſeparate Congregations*, wherein *ſome* things *muſt* be Indifferent. I hope they will not here alledge, They love *Diviſion quatenus ipſum*; and that to *croſs* S. *Paul*'s Precept, they love
Rom. 12. 18. *as much as in them lies to live unpeaceably with all men*; or think it their *Duty* to be *Diſturbers*. They will not ſay, they are obliged to *turn the World upſide down*, as once the *Apoſtles* were ſaid to doe, by *Ill-will*. They will not pretend they are bound in Conſcience, to *ſet up* That *Partition-Wall* our Saviour came to *break down*; and *throw* the World into a *Chaos of Confuſion*, worſe and wilder than *That*, out of which 'twas firſt *taken*.

taken. Nor do I think that they will plead, They were *decreed* to love *Schiſm*, and *cannot help it.* They will not *ſay* (whate're ſome *think*) that any man's *Avarice* was *decreed* to midwive Schiſm into the World, for the Love of ſweet *Sacrilege*, or other *Spoils*: or that his *Envy* was *Prædetermin'd* to ſow the *Tares of Diſſenſion* for ſweet *Revenge*: However *Envy* and *Ambition* are as *probable* Impellents, as any other. For, had *Aërius* been *timely* made a *Biſhop himſelf*, he had not *envied* That *Order*, much leſs *headed* a Sect *againſt* it. And were our Schiſmaticks *Legiſlators*, they would *inforce* ſuch a Conformity, as *now* they will not *forgive*, much leſs *comply with.* They ſeem to reckon themſelves *oppreſs'd*, in that they are not *permitted*, much leſs made *choiſe of*, to be our *Rulers.* Which yet by *their Principles* of *Liberty* and *Conſcience*, (as They expound them,) they are *incapable* of being, ſhould we *deſire* them. For if things which are *Indifferent* are not *properly* the matter of *Human Laws*, (as *human* Laws are contradiſtinct unto *Divine*,) Nothing elſe with any reaſon can be pretended ſo to be. For *Neceſſary* things are *all* ſufficiently *commanded* by God *already* in his Word: and All things *unlawfull* are *There* as evidently *forbidden:*

bidden: and things *impoſſible* are not *commandable at all.* 'Tis very evident that the Former, both affirmative and negative, are the *Divine Laws of God*, and *in no wiſe human.* So that if our *diſobedient* and *Schiſmatical* Brethren ſhould now be *choſen* or *admitted* our *Legiſlators*; Then by the *Principles* they are of, (would they be but *true* to them,) there would be but *one Law* (preciſely *human*) which They could poſſibly *enact*, and it muſt be *This*; *That every Chriſtian man living ſhould be a Law unto Himſelf.* Every man's *Reaſon* ſhould be his *Guide*; and every man's *Will* ſhould be his *Reaſon.* Therefore, according to their own Principles, they cannot *poſſibly* be our *Rulers*, if we would *have* them. For every man's *Reaſon* would be his *Royalty.* All *beſides* would be *Rulers*, as much as *They.* And ſo for *Them* to be our *Governours* implies a groſs *Contradiction*; by nothing in the world to be avoided, but by their *quitting Their* Principles, and *owning ours.*

Now I am tempted to appeal to our *Schiſmaticks themſelves*, whether they are not ἀναπολόγητοι, Sinners in whoſe behalf *no Apology* can be made. Whether they are not the *worſt* Recuſants, becauſe the moſt *unexcuſable.* Whether they

they are not *worse* than *Those* who were accused by the Apostle of being tossed to and fro by every *blast*, and *carried about* with every *Wind* of false Doctrin, when (not our Doctrins, true or false, but) even our *Surplices* can *scare* them, and *Organs blow* them out of the Church. Whether it will not be *more tolerable* in the tremendous day of Judgment, for them that *never* were *Members* of *Jesus Christ*, than for them, who *having been Members*, did *excommunicate Themselves*, and even *cut* themselves *off* from his Mystical *Body*, which is his *Church*. Whether, when the publick *Safety* cannot evermore subsist without publick *Peace*, nor publick *Peace* without *Compliance* on one side or other, it is not *fitter* that such as *They* should meekly *comply* with their *Superiours*, than that their *Superiours* should *bow* to *Them*? Whether an *yielding* can be made better, than by the *ignorant* to the most *learned*, by the *fewest* to the *most numerous*, by the *Shrubs* to the *Cedars*, or by the *Subjects* of *Law* to the *Legislators*. Indeed *Obedience* to *one another*, that is to *Equals*, and *Obedience* to *Inferiours*, or People exceedingly *below* us, might be grievous and vexing with *some Excuse*. However *Christians* are (*in love*) bid to *serve one another*; and *Christ* did *wash*

his Diſciples Feet; and *England* has had her *Saturnalia*; during which, ſome of the greateſt and nobleſt *Maſters* did indure *a December of Twelve years long*, and did contentedly ſee their *Servants to bear Rule over them.* But *Obedience* to *Superiours*, to men *above* us (not *againſt*, but) *according* to the Laws of Heaven and Earth, (ſuch as was the *Obedience* of *Chriſt* to *Cæſar*; for *Chriſt* according to his *Manhood* was but a *Subject*, though *King of Kings* in regard of his *Divinity*; and *Cæſar* was one of thoſe *Mortal Gods*, who *liv'd like Devils*, and *died like Men*;) I ſay, *Obedience* unto *Superiours* whom the Scripture calls *Gods*, is the moſt noble, and the moſt natural, and the moſt neceſſary Duty; ſuch as bears up upon its ſhoulders (by God's Aſſiſtance) both the *whole Fabrick* of the *Church*, and *all* the *Kingdoms* of the *Earth*, and of *Heaven itſelf.* Whereas *Schiſms* are Pioneers, which digging below their very Foundations, do clearly ſtrive to *undermine* and *ſubvert them All.*

§ 15. I have now done with my 4 Reaſons, why our *Schiſmaticks* rather than others, (however ſcandalous in their Lives,) are ſingl'd out from the whole *Herd* of Notorious Sinners, to be made the *chief Exemplars of diſorderly*

orderly Walking, from whom we are most to *withdraw our selves*. These (I say) are the chief reasons, why by this Precept of S. *Paul*, compar'd with Those of S. *John*, and our *Blessed Saviour*, we are chiefly bound to *separate* from *Separatists*. Yet would I not here be thought to mean, that *every Subject* should be a *Judge*, from what *kind* of *Separatists* (in Civil Conversation) he ought to *separate*. (For publick disorder and confusion might Thence ensue.) But I would be understood to intend Those *Schismaticks*, who are censured by their *Governours* and *proper Judges* to be *Such*. From a *civil* Commerce with *such* (and a commerce of free *choice*) I think it a Duty to abstain, and to abstain in such a measure, as our *Lord* and His *Apostles* have mark'd out to us.

§ 16. And now I may have done with my *Sermon* too, but that I have remaining an hearty Wish, that our *Separating Brethren* would unpassionately consider Three obvious Truths. First, that if *Obedience* to *Christian Governours* and *Laws* is not really so *essential* to *Christianity itself*, but that still it is possible (as some imagin) that *Saints* may be *Schismaticks*, and *Schismaticks Saints*, Then our *Faith*, and our *Preaching*, yea and our *Scriptures* are all *in*

vain. Welcome *Anarchy* and *Diſorder*; and Farewell to all *Society.* Next, that however *Sin* and *Errour* are very different in themſelves, yet a *Wilfulneſs* in *Errour* does make *ſuch an Errour* become a *Wilfull Sin* too. And the *contemning* of *Authority*, link'd with an obſtinate contumacious *fomenting of Diviſions*, is ſuch a Monſter, that the *leaſt* Errour of Judgment which had been *venial* in *itſelf*, is by theſe Aggravations made *great* and *grievous*, and contracts unto itſelf as well a *Diabolical*, as *Damning* Quality. Thirdly, that *Schiſm*, were it *no Sin*, were very well worthy the *parting with*, for the purchaſing of ſo pretious and ſo ineſtimable a *Jewell*, as *Publick Peace*; the fruits of which (rightly us'd) are *Piety*, and *Proſperity*, *Strength*, and *Safety.* 'Twas for the purchaſing of This, that S. *Paul* had his Compliances with *Jews* and *Gentiles.* 'Twas for This that he *yielded* to circumciſe *Timothy*; and 'twas for This that he *refuſed* to circumciſe *Titus*; (as well as for the ſhewing his Chriſtian Liberty and obedience to the Conciliar Conſtitution Then firſt Enacted.) 'Twas his great Buſineſs and Deſign, to make the moſt *adverſe* Parties *agree* in *Chriſt.* To gain the *Jews* therefore, he deny'd himſelf the *uſe* of his *Chriſtian* Liberty: and as well to win

1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

win the *Gentiles*, he *resum'd* the use of it with equal Care. 'Twas to *unite* dissenting Parties, and make them *meet* in *one Church*, that the *Apostles* (meeting together in a full Council at *Jerusalem*) thought it requisite to *establish* Things *Indifferent* by a *Law*. Thereby giving a **Necessity à parte post*, to things *Indifferent à parte ante*. It was to *gain* both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that our Lord in *some things* comply'd with *Both*. And to hope that our *hitherto-dissenting Brethren*, who now do *enfeeble* and *indanger* both *Church* and *State* by their Disobedience, will one day *comply* with their *Superiours* upon the Reasons I have given, (if by any fair means they may be brought to their knowledge, and laid before them,) is at present the *greatest Charity* I can have for those men, who are *void* of *All Charity*, till That is done.

* Act. 15. 28, 29.

§ 17. *Finally, Brethren, farewell:* and suffer a word of Exhortation from S. *Paul* and S. *Peter*, Both joyn'd together. *Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as Brethren, be pitifull, be curteous:* (so S. *Peter:*) to which I add out of S. *Paul*, καταρτίζεσθε, *be knit-together* and *compacted*, (so the Greek,) or *be ye perfect*, (so the English,) because your *being perfect*, must consist in your being

1 Pet. 3. 8.

2 Cor. 13. 11.

Phil. 3. 16.

being well *knit-together and compacted in one Communion.* Therefore *walk by the ſame Rule, and mind the ſame things, live in Peace; and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you.*

To Him be Glory for ever and ever.

OF

OF CIRCUMSPECTION

In THESI.

EPH. 5. 15, 16.

See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, Redeeming the Time, because the days are evil.

1. AS *Philostratus* once said of *Apollonius Tyanæus*, ὁ βίον Ἀπολλωνίε, ἀλλ' ἀποδημίαν, That he writ not his *Life*, but his *Peregrination*; after the very same manner may I say here, The *Life* of man is but * *a Pilgrimage*, and that *Pilgrimage* but a *Walk*; A going *up-hill* on *one* side, and *down-hill* on the *other*. First of all he walks *up-hill*, untill he comes to his 30th. or 40th. year; And from thence he walks *down-hill*, untill he comes to *fourscore*. For

* Gen. 47. 9. Heb. 11. 13.

All, after *That*, is a *Descending* into the *Pit*, (or if it must needs be call'd *walking*,) a kind of *walking in the Valley of the shadow of Death.*

2. First then περιπατεῖτε, be sure to *walk:* do not faintly *lie down*, or yawningly *lean* upon your *Elbows*: * for your *Journy* is *long*, and your *Time* but *little.* Therefore up, and be doing. Set your *feet* in his *steps*, who *went about doing Good*, and rejoyced as a Giant to *run his Course.* For rather than be *benighted*, we must not *walk* onely, but *run* too. So saith the Author to the *Hebrews*; * *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

* Ὁ βίος βραχύς, ἡ ὁδὸς μακρὴ, ὁ καιρὸς ὀξύς. Hippocrat. *Aphor.* 1. Ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῖν ἀτμός ἐστιν. Jam. 4. Ὡς ἐσμὸν ἅδην, πάλιν σκιᾶς εἰκότα; Sophoc. * Heb. 12. 1.

3. And yet withall we must remember *Vespasian*'s *Motto*, (which deserves to be ingraven in all our Rings,) * σπεύδειν βραδέως, *to make haste slowly*; that is, to make *no more haste* than may consist with *good speed.* Because the *way* we are to *walk* in is not *steep* onely, but *slippery.* Therefore look to your *footing*, and mark your *steps* as you *walk* along: for the *footing* of a *David had well-nigh slipt.* Nor is the *way* onely *slippery*, but *narrow* too. Nay our Saviour saith farther, (though 'tis not expres'd

* *Quàm impensè etiam Octavius Augustus Cæsar eodem Dicto delectatus fuerit, videre est apud* Aul. Gell. *l.* 10. *c.* 11. *&* Macrob. *Saturnal. l.* 6.

expres's'd in our *English* Bibles,) 'Tis ὁδὸς στενὴ καὶ τεθλιμμένη, a way *incumber'd* as well as *narrow*, 'Tis very *difficult* to *find* it, and very easie to *tread aside*. And therefore βλέπετε πῶς, see *how* ye walk. (So it is in the *Greek*, though somewhat otherwise in the *English*.)

4. And then in the next place, βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς, see how *circumspectly* ye do it, (as it is in the translation,) or see how *exactly*, (as it is in the original.) The word ἀκριβῶς is of an higher signification, than our ordinary Bible doth here express. It imports a *Providence*, and a *Caution*, which being joyn'd with *Circumspection*, make up the *Integral Parts* of a Christian *Prudence*. Now we must *walk* so *exactly* in all these respects, (with so much *Providence*, and *Caution*, and *Circumspection*,) as not to turn an hair's breadth to the *right* hand, or to the *left*. We must not be *Latitudinarians* in point of Practice; but must rather ὀρθοποδεῖν, *walk* with such regular and *upright Feet*, as to *abstain* ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους, in *either* notion of the word; not onely from all the *kinds*, but all the *Appearances* of *evil*.

5. Not at all like those Hypocrites, who are *indulgent* to the *Evil*, and onely *abstain* from the bare *Appearance*; not like Him in the Epi-

gram, who put himſelf to *Death*, for *fear* of *Dying*; not like the *Phariſees* of the Times, who think it their Duty to *rebell*, for fear of a little *Diſobedience*; and greedily ſwallow the *greateſt Camels*, for nothing elſe but their avoiding the *ſmalleſt Gnats*. This is a *fooliſh Circumſpection*, to be ſo ſhy of a *Ceremony*, as to run headlong into a *Schiſm*; and for fear of *Superſtition*, to ſwallow practical *Atheiſm*. For are not they the *greateſt Atheiſts*, who (to uſe S. *Paul*'s words of the antient *Gnoſticks*) *profeſs to know God, but in their works deny him?* And They *deny* him in their *works*, who quite *diſown* him in his *Word*, where it calls for Compliance (in All things lawfull) with his *Vicegerents*. For ſure the ſame Spirit that ſaith, *Obey God rather than Man*, doth alſo ſay, * *Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's ſake*. The ſame Spirit that ſaith, *Call no man Maſter upon Earth*, and *Be ye not the Servants of men*, doth alſo ſay, *Servants obey your Maſters in all things, that the Name of God be not blaſphemed; nor onely with Eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers, but as the Servants of Chriſt*. Again, the ſame Spirit that ſaith, *Thou ſhalt have no God but me*, doth alſo ſay, * *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves*, &c. *for the Powers that are*,

* 1 Pet. 2. 13.

* Heb. 13. 17.

Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, &c.

are, are ordain'd of God, and He that *resists, receives Damnation.* From all which it follows, that for a Professor of Christianity to *disobey* the *Laws* of *men*, under *pretense* (rather than *fear*) of *disobeying* the *Laws* of *God*, when this is one of *God's* chiefest *Laws*, *That we obey the Laws of men*, shews such a spirit of Contradiction, as 'tis not Charity to indure. We must be *circumspect* of our *ways*, as well as of our *walking*. For a *Circumspect Walker* in the *ways* of *Corah*, who dares not do as *God bids* him for *fear* of *Sin*, and shews a Zeal to *serve God* by his *Disobedience*, who craves for Liberty of *Conscience* to break the *Bonds* of Society, which are the *Laws* of the *Nation* wherein we live, (that is to say, in the Consequence, for a *Liberty* of *Conscience* to *cut* mens *Throats*,) and because *the Meek shall inherit the Earth*, does think it a *part* of his *Humility* to set his *foot* upon *Crowns* and *Scepters*; such a *Circumspect Walker* is the greatest Monster to be imagin'd. He may *profess* to *know God*, as the *Gnosticks* did; but in his *works* he *denies* him, like any *Gnostick*. And as a *practical Atheist* is still the *worst*, so such a *Boutefeux* is the *worst* of all *practical Atheists*. 'Twas by so *foolish* a *Circumspection*, and too easie a *Connivence* at all such *Folly*, that so

many of our *days* have been so *evil*, and stand in need of a *Redemption*. And therefore for the future, *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the Time, because the days are evil.*

6. The words are seasonable and fit in a threefold respect. In respect of the *Counsel* which our Apostle here gives; in respect of the *Occasion* on which he gives it; and in respect of the *Reason* wherewith he does inforce it on those that *read* him. The subject *matter* of the *Counsell* is *Christian Prudence*. The *Counsell* is given upon *Occasion* of great and manifold *Temptations*, whereby a Christian is *ensnared* on every side. The principal *Reason* why it is press'd, is the present *Corruption* of the *Time*. A Time wherein there is requir'd the *Wisedom* and *Wariness* of the *Serpent*, whereby to preserve the *Inoffensiveness* and *Integrity* of the *Dove*.

7. Now though *Prudence* is a thing which does consist of three parts, to wit, of *Providence*, *Caution*, and *Circumspection*, (which though commonly *confounded*, are very *different* in themselves;) yet in the Tenor of my Discourse, I shall keep to the stile of our *English* Bibles; and so far comply with the popular

pular usage of the word, (which is apparently *Synecdochical*,) as to name *Circumspection* in stead of *Prudence*.

8. And first, because our *Inadvertency* appears to be the very *Root*, from which the whole *Stock* of Sin (with all its *Fruit* and its *Branches*) doth seem to *grow*; βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς, *See how ye walk circumspectly.*

9. Next, because there is such a thing, as an *Inconsiderate Circumspection*, for want of a necessary regard both to the *manner*, and *method*, and *measure* of it; See therefore that ye walk circumspectly, μὴ ὡς ἄφρονες, *not as Fools, but as wise*: ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε, *walk in wisedom*, Colos. 4. 5. And as your *Speech*, so your *Behaviour* is to be *season'd* also *with Salt*, v. 6. Ye must behave your selves *exactly* betwixt your *Scylla* and your *Charybdis*; Corruption of *Soul* upon the *one* side, and Destruction of *Body* on the *other*. But still the *first* and *chiefest* heed is to be taken of the *former*; that the *better* part may be in *safety*, whatever Disasters befall the *worse*.

10. And then in the last place, because the *worse* the Times are, by so much the *better* and the more *circumspect* men ought to be; Therefore it follows in the Text, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρόν, *Redeem*,

Redeem, or *buy out* the Season. For it is not τὸ χρόνον, *the Time at large*, but precisely τὸ καιρὸν, *the Nick of Time*. And so the *meaning* of it must be, Be ye sober, and vigilant, and watch at all *opportunities*; use such *Providence*, and *Caution*, and *Circumspection*, as to fly from *Sin* on the *one* hand, and causeless *Suffering* on the *other*.

11. This I think may suffice for an *explication* of the Text; and by this a man may easily discern the *Links*, which will make up the *Chain* of my whole *Design*.

12. For first, considering how we are plac'd as so many *Sheep* amongst *Wolves*, we must walk for That reason with *Circumspection*. And then, because there are Errours on *either* hand, as well on the *Right*, as on the *Left*; we must therefore walk circumspectly, *not as Fools, but as Wise*. And this we must do in a threefold respect; to wit, of *Things*, and *Persons*, and *Opportunities*: of *evil* Things, of *evil* Persons, yea of all the very *Occasions* and *Appearances* of evil. Our *walking* is to be *circumspect* in respect of *All* Persons; and as of all *other* persons, so especially of *our selves*. It must be in respect both of our *Enemies*, and our *Friends*; and as of all *other* Friends, so especially of those who

who pretend a Friendship unto our *Souls*. And this must be, as at *all* times, so more especially in *These*. Our *days* being likely to be as *evill* at least in *one* sense, as *the Days* in my Text are said to be *evill* in *another*.

§ 1. Before I can orderly come to speak of Circumspection *in Hypothesi*, as it stands in relation to This or That Station or State of Men, (which to do will be the work of another Text,) I must consider it *in Thesi*, or in the *gross*. And this the rather, as well because it lies first in the order of Nature; as because Heedfulness in the *General* should be as well known to be strictly *necessary*, as *That Triumvirate* of our Enemies (The *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*,) is universally acknowledged to be *Deceitfull*. And how deceitfull *These* are, one may conjecture even by *This*; That there was hardly ever any such *Golden* age, as had not its portion of *Iron* in it. For no sooner had God Almighty *imprinted* his *Image* upon the *Creature*, than his *Competitor* or *Rival* began to *ingrave* his *Superscription*. No sooner had the *true Coin* receiv'd its *Stamp* from God's *Mint*, but straight the Tempter turn'd *Alchymist* to embase the *Metall*. There was a *Serpent* even in *Paradise*; (or else our first Parents had not so soon been kept out

with a flaming Sword;) and a *ſtumbling-block* in *Heaven*; (or elſe ſo great an Hoſt of Angels had not *faln headlong* into *Hell:*) Yea the bleſſed Converſation of *Chriſt Himſelf* was no ſuch Amulet or Preſervative, no ſuch *conquering Prophylactick* againſt the *Contagion* of this *Diſeaſe*, but that there was a *Peter* to *deny*, yea and a *Judas* to *betray* him. And if theſe things are ſo, That S. *Peter* himſelf, the *firſt* and *chief* of the Apoſtles, was not *all his life* ſafe in a ſtate of *Grace*; Nor the *Protoplaſt* for a *day* in a ſtate of *Innocence*; No nor *Lucifer* for a *week* in a ſtate of *Glory*; Lord! how fitly may *any* Monitor ſay That to *us*, which our Apoſtle thought *needfull* (not onely *uſefull*) to his *Epheſians*, βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς, *See how ye walk circumſpectly?* If 'tis as true in things *ſpiritual*, as it is thought in things *temporal*, That the one half of the world is deceiv'd and cheated by the other; and that if there are no more than an *Hundred* Sects, *Ninety* and *Nine* of That hundred muſt needs be ſick of ſome *Impoſture*; (unleſs *Chriſt* can be divided, or the Truth of Religion be more than One;) If in our hovering condition 'twixt *Grace* and *Nature*, we are placed in the Confines of two implacable Enemies, the *Law in our Members*, and the

Mar. 14. 68, 69, &c.
Gen. 3. 22, 23.
2 Pet. 2. 4.
Rom. 7. 23.

the *Law in our Minds*, whereof the *one* is ſtill *warring* againſt the *other*; And if the Author of *this Caveat againſt Supineneſs and Nonchalance*, though the great Doctor of the Gentiles, and alſo a Veſſel of God's Election, was yet ſo brought into *Captivity to the Law of Sin*, (as the 7th. to the *Romans* is very *commonly* underſtood, though perhaps not ſo happily as might be wiſh'd,) that he was forc'd to break forth into That tragical *Ecphonéſis*, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this Death*! O then what a *Neceſſity* muſt needs be incumbent upon *us*, that we repeat this holy Caveat, and reinforce it on one another, βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς, *See how ye walk circumſpectly?* If *in many things we offend all*, and *He who offendeth* but *in one Point*, *is* ſomeway *guilty of all the reſt*; If an *account* is to be *render'd* of every *idle* word ſpoken, and ſure much more of every *wicked* one; If none ſhall *enter into life* but *He that keepeth the Commandments*, and life does dwell in *That City*, to which the *Gate* is as *ſtreit*, as the *way narrow*; inſomuch that of the Many who *ſeek* to enter into life, many ſhall *miſs* it for all their *ſeeking*; If onely *He that overcometh ſhall* have the privilege to *taſt of the hidden Manna*, ſo as the *righteous* man himſelf

Jam. 2. 10. & ch. 3. 2.

Matth. 12. 36.

Matth. 19. 17. & ch. 7. 14.

Luk. 13. 24.

Rev. 2. 7, 17.

1 Pet. 4. 18.

himself shall be *scarcely sav'd*; and all for want of being *heedfull* both of the *way* he *treads* in, and in the *ordering* of his *steps*, and as to the *sureness* of his *footing*; Methinks we need no other Sermon, than the constant repetition of this one Text, (at least 'twere well if This Text were *call'd to mind* at every Sermon,) Βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς, *See how ye walk circumspectly.* If S. *John* thought fit to preach *no other Sermon* to the Convert *Eusebius* speaks of, than the *Psalmist's* Resolution of * *taking heed unto his ways*, which made his Convert not sollicitous to be enrich'd with *more Lessons*, whilst he found that *That One* was sufficient of itself to employ him *wholly*; If we live in an Age of so much fallacy and Deceit, and yet for all that of so much Heedlesness and Security, that no abundance of Caution can be too much; It follows then that *This Caveat* cannot be thought upon too much, or inculcated too warmly, or *unexcusably offend* in the Repetition, but that we have such *prurient Ears* as cannot forsooth be pleas'd without great variety, and such *capricious understandings* as will not easily be quieted with *Truth* and *Plainness*; but must have *Altitudes* and *Depths* for their Entertainment.

* Psal. 39. 1.

§ 2. All

§ 2. All our *Sins* and our *Miſeries* ſeem to have enter'd into the World at this *one Door*, even *the want* of That *Heed* which is here injoyn'd. *Other* Defects may be as *fibres*, but *This* is ſure the *Main Root*, (as I ſaid before,) from which the whole *Stock* of Miſchief (with all its *Fruits*, and its *Branches*,) does clearly *grow*. 'Twas meerly for want of *Circumſpection*, that our firſt Parents *fell*; and ſtill 'tis for want of *Circumſpection*, that all their *Poſterity* is ever *ſtumbling*. 'Tis but for want of *Circumſpection*, that many Profeſſors are ſo *blind as to be led by the blind*, till both the *Leaders* and the *Followers fall* all *together* into the *Ditch*. In the whole *Body* of *Chriſtianity*, *Circumſpection* may fitly be call'd *the Eye*. Now as our *Eyes* are put in our *Heads* to direct our *Feet*; and as good be quite *blind*, as be *always winking*: ſo *Circumſpection* in our *Hearts* is to guard our *Actions*; and as good be *none at all*, as *unwary* Chriſtians. For what with thoſe powerfull *Impellents* which Satan uſeth from *without*, and thoſe bewitching *Allectives* wherewith he charms us from *within*, we are ſo ſmoothly *drawn aſide* with great contentedneſs into *ſome* dangers, and ſo vehemently *dragg'd* with equall reluctance into *others*, that we do

not onely (like *Janus*) stand in need of *four* Eyes, but (like *Argus*) to be *Eyes all over*. And just as the Builders of the *second* Temple at *Jerusalem* were so encompassed with Enemies on every side, (the *Chaldæans* before, and the *Philistins* behind, the *Moabites* on the right hand, and the *Edomites* on the left,) that they were taught by their Necessity to hold a *Sword* in the *one* hand, for the defending of the *Workmanship* which they advanced with the *other*; Even so we Christians, who are dignified with the Title of **Fellow-Labourers with God*, whilst we are *building up our selves in the most holy Faith*, and building up our selves into *Temples* too, (for *Temples we are of the Holy Ghost*,) must have *one* Eye upon our *Enemy*, as well as *another* upon our *work*; still looking upward towards *God*, but withall downward towards our *Tempter*; still looking *foreward* towards *Vertue*, but withall *backward* towards *Vice*. We must not onely have an Eye unto the right and left hand of our Spiritual *Poyse* (like a man *walking* upon a *Rope*,) but like a *Thief* at high *Noon*, just in the *Act* of his *purloyning*, must look exactly quite *round about* us.

* Θεῷ συνεργοί, 1 Cor. 3. 9. Mar. 16. 20.

1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.

§ 3. And the reason of This is extremely evident. For if we onely look *upwards*, we shall

ſhall be eaſily apt to *ſtumble*, like Mother *Eve*; who, whilſt ſhe fixt her *whole Aſpect* upon the *goodneſs* of the *End*, did overlook the manifold *Evill* which lay concealed in the *Means*. So præproperous was the *Haſte* which ſhe made towards *Knowledge*, that ſhe left *Obedience* behind her back. Or if we onely look *forewards* to ſhun a *Præcipice*, we may at that very inſtant be attacqu'd *behind* us with a *Wolf*. Juſt as *Judas* was ſo *intent* upon the *Money* lying *before* him, that he was *blind* to the *Deſpair* which *dogg'd* him cloſely at the *heels*. And we may gueſs by That Threat of God Almighty to the Serpent, [*It ſhall bruiſe thy Head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel,*] that commonly the Devil does come *behind* us; and loves to ſurpriſe us in a part the *fartheſt diſtant* from our *Eyes*; that is to ſay, at ſuch a time, as in which we are remoteſt from Chriſtian *Prudence*. Or if we look onely upon the *left* hand for the avoiding of a *Shelve*, we may by our Negligence of the *right* be ſwallow'd up of a *Quick-ſand*. Like ſome Pretenders to Reformation, who taking heed of *Superſtition*, but nothing elſe, are ſo much the apter to grow *profane*; Taking heed but of *one* extreme, they run into the *other*, which is many times the worſe too; and

Gen. 3. 15.

and to prevent an *Inconvenience* incur a *Miſchief*. Thus we ſee how it concerns us on every ſide, not to look *upwards* onely, or *downwards*, not onely *backwards*, or *forewards*, not to the *right* hand onely, or to the *left*, but at the ſame point of Time to be both *provident*, and *cautious*, and even *circumſpect* in the *letter*, which [*à circumſpiciendo*] is to carry our Eyes quite *round about* us.

§ 4. Nor muſt we be onely looking *round*, but be *always looking*. The word is βλέπετε, *See*; But *See* we cannot, whilſt we are *ſleeping*. And by our Saviour's Admonition, we are to *watch*, as well as *pray*, *leſt we enter into Temptation*. So S. *Peter* to all in General, who are concern'd for their own Safety, does recommend a ſtrict *Vigilance*, as no leſs requiſite than *Sobriety*; and that for this reaſon, becauſe *the Devil* is ſtill *awake*, whilſt *we* are *ſleeping*. *Be*

1 Pet. 5. 8. *ſober*, *be vigilant*, *becauſe your Adverſary the Devil goeth about as a roaring Lion*, (and that by *Night* as well as by *Day*,) *ſeeking whom he may devour*. *Whom reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the Faith*. So that in our Chriſtian *Warfare*, beſides the *manning* of our *Works*, we need our *Scouts*, and our *Countermines*. We muſt *beſiege* our very *Beſiegers*; And as that Sophiſter, *The World*, does

does ſurround *us* with *Fallacy*, ſo muſt *we* the *World* with *Circumſpection.*

§ 5. Nor does the Prudence of a Chriſtian end onely *Here.* For *Circumſpection* is to be us'd both in the *manner*, and in the *method*, and eſpecially in the *meaſure* of being *circumſpect.* It being obvious to infer from the following Words, [*See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe,*] that there is in the World a kind of *accurate folly*, an *inconſiderate Circumſpection*, a *capricious* ſort of *Warineſs*, of which we are alſo to *beware.* Such as is lying all Night out of Doors, to be ſure that our Houſes ſhall not fall upon our heads: Deſtroying Vineyards, to prevent Drunkenneſs: Pulling down Diſcipline and the Hierarchy, to ſhun the Tyranny of a Pope: Diſtruſting the Fathers of the Primitive Church, becauſe of Antichriſt's being at work in the Apoſtles own Times: Making the Laws and Law-givers conform themſelves to Nonconformity, for fear the Church ſhould want a *Breadth* whereby to ſupport her Superſtructure: Eating of nothing but Nuts and Shell-fiſh, for fear the Cook ſhould be a Sloven. There are ſome uneaſie Souls, who ſeem at leaſt to be incumber'd with ſo incomparable a *Niceneſs*, that under colour of

Eph. 5. 15.

reſpect to the Word of God, they take *The Scripture* to be the *Rule*, I do not ſay of the *moſt weighty*, (for ſo it is,) but even of their *trivial'ſt* and *ſlighteſt* Actions; looking on every thing as *Sinfull*, to which the *Plain Word of God* does not immediately *direct* them. From which fundamental Miſtake it is, that They dare not call it Wedneſday, but the Fourth day of the Week; nor Nine of the Clock, but the Third hour of the Day. A *Surplice* or a *Sacrament* muſt not be *mention'd*, becauſe there are not ſuch words in all the Scriptures; no more a *Sacrament*, than a *Surplice*. And by the very ſame reaſon, (as our judicious Mr. *Hooker* does well obſerve,) If a Maſter commands his Servant but to take up a Straw, the Servant ſhall not be obliged in point of *conſcience* to obey, untill his Maſter has found a Text for that one *particular*. For though the Scripture ſaith to *Servants*, *Obey your Maſters in All things*; yet That Precept is but *General*, and *Dolus latet in Generalibus*, *There are very few Generals which have not a fallacy lurking in them*. Now by ſuch a way of arguing, or at leaſt by one as good, if *Pontius Pilate* was not a *Saint*, becauſe his *Name* is in the *Creed*; at leaſt the *Scribes* and the *Phariſees* muſt paſs for very good

good men, becauſe they have *their Names writ in the Book of life.* But for the men who thus argue, and are *circumſpect* in their walking, not as *wiſe* men, but *fools*, we can in charity call them no worſe than *Hypochondriacs* in religion; men whoſe *Souls* are directed by the Infirmities of their *Bodies*; and are fitter for the *Pity* than *Indignation* of their Superiours, becauſe the *Diſtempers* of their *Spleen* may be ſincerely thought by *Them* to be the *Scruples* of their *Conſcience.* Thus the jealous *Mithridates* ſtood in ſuch fear of being poiſon'd, that even his *Meals* were all *Antidote*; and ſo his Body in tract of time became a *walking Pharmacopœia.* This indeed is a *great*, but an *heedleſs* Caution. Such as does *croſs* and *confute* the Proverb, becauſe *abundance* of *this* is *hurtfull.* Some *heed* therefore is to be *taken*, not to be *heedleſs* and *imprudent* in the extravagant *exceſs* of our taking heed; and that we do not *deceive* our ſelves with too immoderate a fear of our being *deceiv'd.*

§ 6. But This is certainly a Caution, to which a ſmall portion of Rhetorick will be ſufficient to perſuade us. So unapt we are to erre on the *farther ſide* of This Duty, that our *uſual* fault is, we are too much *behither* it. Our

greateſt danger commonly is our opinion that there is *none*; and we are moſt likely to be *unſafe*, by our too great aptneſs to be *ſecure*. Indeed in matters of little moment, concerning the *Body*, or the *Purſe*, we need no Sermons againſt *Security*, or excitations to *Circumſpection*. Very few there are that travell in times of danger, without a *Piſtol*, or a *Sword*; or that in places of *infection* will walk the ſtreets without an *Amulet*. Few Families go to bed, till they have made faſt their *Doors*; and in the morning when they ariſe, their firſt care is to *ſhut out Nakedneſs* and *Hunger*. So that if it were a *Sin* to be in *Poverty*, or a *ſcandalous* matter to ſuffer *Pain*, there would be nothing ſo *difficult*, as not to abound in this Duty of *Circumſpection*. But, alas! we do not conſider (heedleſs Creatures as we are) how it fares with our *Souls*, as with ſo many *Ships*, wherein the very *leaſt Crevices* (if undiſcover'd) are too ſufficient to *drown* us *all*. And yet how partially we prefer the care of our *Bodies* and *Eſtates*, before the *Care* and *Concernment* we ought to have of and for our *Souls*, we may conjecture by the *Practice* of the *Phyſician*, and the *Lawyer*, above That of the *Divine*. For *one* Scruple in the *Conſcience*, how *many* are there in

in the *ſtomach*? How many *Empiricks* are ſought to, for here and there a ſingle *Confeſſor*? and how many *reall Patients* are in all places to be met with, for one *true Penitent*? Be there never ſo *ſlight* an *Ulcer* in any part of the *Body*, we ſtraight deſire the grim Artiſt to uſe his *Corroſive* and his *Probe*; perhaps his *Lance*, and his *Cauſtick* too. But be the *Soul* never ſo *ulcerous*, we are content either with *none*, or a *palliate* Cure. So again it is in the other Inſtance; That though we have little or no ſollicitude about the *making of our Calling and Election ſure*, (which in my Text is expreſſed by *walking circumſpectly*, as *Wiſe*, and *not as Fools*,) nor trouble our heads with an *Inquiry*, what ſhall become of us *hereafter*; what kind of Intereſt we may have in the Bloud of *Chriſt*; what kind of *Title* we can pretend to the inheriting of a Kingdom, a joyfull Æternity in *Reverſion*, and how we ſhall plead it at the *Aſſizes* which will one day be *held* in *the Court of Heaven*; Yet be there never ſo ſmall a flaw in any *Title* to an *Eſtate*, Lord! how *ſedulous* we are to have the matter *made up*? How many *Counſellors* are conſulted, and ſet on work, for *one Caſuiſt*? How many *Caſes* are try'd in *Law*, for *one* in *Conſcience*? I will not call it the

universall, but *usuall* Custom, that when *Luke* the good *Physician* has little hope of our *Bodies*, we send for *Gamaliel* the able *Lawyer*, to take care of our *Estates*. And (That being done,) Then for *Barnabas* the *Divine*, (who is a *Son of Comfort* too,) to make provision for our *Æternity*.

§ 7. Thus we see the most of men have *Circumspection* very sufficient; but 'tis sufficiently *misapply'd* too. And in the Misapplication lies all the Mischief. Just as the *Pharisee* in the Parable was very *free* of his *Confessions*; But he apply'd them to his *Vertues*, and *not* his *Sins*. He made confession of his *righteousness*, to wit, his *fasting twice a week*, and *paying Tithes* to a *Pin's-worth* of *Mint* and *Cummin*; He very ambitiously confess'd that he thought himself *holier than other men*, (for which he gave *God* thanks too, and *not himself:*) But of his manifold *impieties* we do not hear a word from him. So the greatest numbers of men are very *circumspect*, and *wary:* But they are wary of their *Duties*, as of dangerous things; things which probably will betray them to the *disfriendship* of the *world*; (esteeming *Him* an *imprudent* man, who dares adventure on what is *strait*, when the Times are *crooked*; and to *stand*

stand his old *Ground*, when *new* is temporally *safer*, and more in *vogue* too.) Men are wary of *loving Enemies*, or *doing good to such as hate them*; very *wary* how they part with a sinfull *Pleasure*, or send a bill of divorce to a beloved *Passion*. Extremely *heedfull* they are and *cautious*, how they *fall* from a *station* of wealth and honour; how they *beat down their Bodies*, and bring their *Flesh* into *subjection*; how they *crucifie the world unto themselves*, and *themselves unto the world*: (as if there were nothing more *ridiculous* than That primitive *Criterion*, by which a *Christian* was distinguish'd from *Jew* and *Gentile*; nor any thing more to be avoided by one of *Quality* and *Parts*, than such a *seriousness* of *life*, and such a *tenderness* of *Conscience*, as may expose him to the Censure of his being little more than a *well-bred Quaker*.) And as 'tis commonly observ'd of the *Lacedæmonians*, that they stated the *guilt* of *Stealth*, not so much in the *Act*, as the *Apprehension*, and therefore reckon'd it a *Sin*, not to *steal*, but to be *caught*: So the greatest *heed taken* by the Majority of Professors, is not so really to be *innocent*, as *not* to be *censur'd* for being *guilty*. As if their Prayer were like *That* of the famous Hypocrite in the Poet,

—— *Pul-*

——————— *Pulchra Laverna,*
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctúmque videri,
Noctem peccatis, & fraudibus objice Nubem.

O my Goddess, give me the Grace to seem as religious as the best, and to be as deceitfull as may be possible. The greatest *Mischief* to be avoided in most mens judgments, (if yet their *Judgments* may be judged of by their *Practice*,) is not the *ocular Sin*, (I mean the *Eye full of Adultery*,) but the *auricular Confession*; Not the *Protestant's Impiety*, but the *Popery* of *making it known.* Now such as These should be exhorted, not so much to *increase*, as to *direct* their Caution; not so much to make it *greater*, as *wiser* and *better* than heretofore; to change the *Object* and the *End* of their Circumspection; that what is *now* a meerly *Carnal*, may suddainly pass into a *spiritual* and *Christian* Prudence. For this will be to walk circumspectly, *not as Fools, but as Wise.*

§ 8. And for the bringing this about with the greater Ease, we must be *circumspect Walkers* in two general respects: In respect of the *Persons* with whom we are conversant, and in respect of the *Rules* by which we are to be directed. I therefore say in respect of *Persons*, (by way of distinction from all other objects,) because

cause our *Days* cannot be *evill*, but as *we our selves* are such: and therefore by *the evill Days* in which it is our Lot to live, must needs be meant the *Evill men* of the Days we live in. And our *Walking* is to be *circumspect*, as in respect even of *all* men, so of *Those* more especially to whom we bear the greatest kindness. (But This is a Point I must refer to another subject of Discourse.) The *Rules* by which we are to walk, not as *fools*, but as *wise*, are especially these two; *Conscience*, and *Discretion*. And for the better using of *These*, we must warily occurr to two grand *Fallacies*, whereby the greatest part of Men are wont to prevaricate with Themselves.

§ 9. Some are so thick of understanding, as to measure their *Conscience* by their *Confidence*; their being lustily *perswaded* a thing is *lawfull*, or *unlawfull*. Esteeming all *without Sin* which is said or done *without Scruple*; and *all* things *sinfull* of which a *scruple* may be *made*. Neither discerning any difference betwixt a *Conscience* which is *tender*, and *misinform'd*, nor yet betwixt a meer *numness*, and *Peace* of Conscience. Such were our *Regicides* here in *England*, who, how scrupulous soever in things *indifferent*, were not scrupulous at all in the point of *Murther*;

But ſturdily pleaded at the Bar, that they believ'd they had a *right* to try, and execute their King; and that they did Both in the Integrity of their hearts; it was no more than their *Conſciences* did dictate to them; their *Conſciences* were ſatisfied in what they did; and by conſequence they would do it, were it for ever to be done. Meaning ſtill by the word *Conſcience*, the *ſtrength* and *ſlurdineſs* of their *Opinion*; which might indeed be call'd *Witchcraft*, as well as *Conſcience*; (I mean with an equal impropriety, and an eaſier pardon to the word.) Thus it was with the *Conſpirators* of our *Gunpowder-Treaſon*, and with the two infamous Murtherers of *Henry* the *Third* and the *Fourth* of *France*, who taking *That* for their *Conſcience* which was indeed but their *Caprice*, made no doubt but their *Murthers* were *Meritorious*. And thus it was for ſome time with furious *Saul*, the *Blaſphemer* and *Perſecutor of Chriſt*; who grew ſo mad, and tranſported, with giddy zeal without knowledge, (as himſelf confeſſed freely againſt himſelf from after the time of his Converſion,) that he thought it his *Duty* to be *deſtructive* of whatſoever was call'd *Chriſtian*. Like Them of whom our Saviour tells us, who thought (forſooth) they were *bound* in *Conſcience*

ſcience to execute *Murther* on the *Apoſtles*, becauſe it was, in *Their Judgments, to do God Service.* Where by the way we may obſerve, how much 'tis every man's duty to *fear himſelf*, and to *ſuſpect* his *own Judgment* in divers caſes.

§ 10. Now the way to *walk circumſpectly* not as *fools*, but as *wiſe*, and to free our ſelves from That Fallacy, which is ſo generally ſwallow'd by other men, is firſt to conſider *what Conſcience is*, (a thing the moſt *talk'd of*, but the leaſt commonly *underſtood*, of any principle or faculty to be imagin'd,) and after *That* to be carefull how we walk by that *Rule.* For whilſt the Rule itſelf is *falſe*, the *Circumſpection* muſt needs be *fooliſh*, and can onely ſerve to make us the more *diſorderly Walkers. Conſcience* indeed is the Rule of *Action*; But to be ſturdily *perſwaded* a thing is *lawfull* or *unlawfull*, is not at *any* time the *Rule*, and not at *all* times the *work* of Conſcience. For *Conſcience* is not a *Perſwaſion*, but *Knowledge* rather; Nor is it *any kind* of knowledge, but *knowledge compared with a Rule*; (as συνείδησις in the Greek, and *Conſcientia* in the Latin, do Both import:) And yet how many of thoſe men who paſs for *Inſtructers of the Ignorant*, and *Eyes to the Blind*, are wont to uſe the word *Conſcience* (before the

people, and to themſelves,) by that dangerous *Catachreſis* I juſt now mention'd? But before I ſay fully what Conſcience *is*, I proceed to ſhew what it is *not*. I ſay, it is not a being ſo fully perſwaded in our minds, as not to have any *regret* or *ſcruple*; to be void of all *Doubt*, or *hæſitation*; for we know the *Sear'd Atheiſt* has none of *That*. And when our Saviour *Chriſt* ſaid, *The time cometh that whoſoever killeth you, ſhall verily think he does God Service*, he did not mean, they ſhall be *conſcionable Murtherers*, or *Perſecutors* of *Men* in the *fear* of *God*, and ſo ſhall break the Commandment in the *Integrity* of their *Hearts*; (for *That* had been to ſay, They ſhall be *innocently guilty*, which had flatly imply'd a *contradiction in Adjecto.*) But his meaning was clearly This, that ſome mens *hearts* ſhall be ſo *hardned* through the *Deceitfulneſs of Sin*, as to miſtake the very *worſt* for the *beſt* of actions. Their *Underſtandings* ſhall be ſo *dark*, and their *Souls* ſo *benighted* with their cuſtomary impieties, as to *grope* after *Murther* inſtead of *Sacrifice*. Juſt like them of whom we read in the *fift* of *Eſa*, (lately match'd with the Readers and Admirers of the *Leviathan*,) who had ſo loſt the diſtinction of *right* and *wrong*, as to put *evill for good, and good for evill*,

evill, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, darkness for light, and light for darkness. The *Custom* of Sin had so *pav'd* their *Palates*, as that they had utterly *lost* their *Tast.* Now it is not a *satisfied*, but *seared* Conscience, which is not startl'd at such impieties. As many *silly* mens Consciences are *too full* of scruples, not because they are *tender*, but *ill-instructed*; so many *wicked* mens Consciences are *void* of Scruples, not because they are *clear*, but *callous*; and so must every thing be that is *cauteriz'd.* Yea give me leave to say farther, Many *desperate Malefactors* have mounted the Gibbet *without regret*, not so much because they had *no scruples* in their *Consciences*, as rather because they had *no Consciences* to be *scrupl'd*; since one that's *sear'd with an hot Iron* (to use the figure of our Apostle) is in effect *none at all.*

§ 11. For (to shew briefly what it *is*, having shew'd largely what it is *not*,) A Man's *Conscience* is his *Knowledge* of what he has *done*, or *not done*, which the known *Law of God* (written *within* him, or *without* him,) has either *commanded*, or *not commanded*; and so by consequence 'tis a *Witness* either *for* him, or *against* him, after the measure that he has *done*, or has *omitted* to do his Duty. From whence it fol-

lows unavoidably, That as *Conscience properly so call'd is* the *Rule* of *Action*, so the known *Law* of *God* is the *Rule* of *Conscience*. And from hence again it follows as unavoidably as before, That for any man to say he is *bound in Conscience*, (as we know who did in the worst of times,) not onely to *covet* his Neighbour's goods, but at once to *kill*, and to take *possession*, (the thing with which the holy Prophet upbraided *Ahab*,) is as much as to say in directer Terms, That he *thinks* it his *Duty* to be a *Devill*.

And so much for the first Fallacy, by which a Multitude of men are led indeed to *walk circumspectly*, but as *Fools*, and not as *Wise*, because against the true *Notion* and *Rule* of Conscience.

§ 12. And as some do thus foolishly offend against *Conscience*, so do others against *Discretion*. For many Professors are very *willing* to be in possession of the *End* of their Christianity, who yet are very *unwilling* to use the *Means*. They would with all their hearts *embrace* the *Service* of *Christ*, but *not abstain* from *those things* with which his Service is *inconsistent*. Desirous they are to *do the thing that is good*; but they cannot abide to *depart from evill*. Or if they have a *woulding* to cease from *That* too, yet

yet they are *fond* of the *Occasions* which still do *tend* and *lead* towards it. There is nothing in the world either more *serviceable* to *Satan*, or more *pernicious* and *destructive* to the *Kingdom* of *Christ*, (which he would gladly set up in the Souls of men,) than That most *pleasant*, but *killing* Fallacy, which the far greatest part of men are wont to impose upon themselves, [*That they need not scruple at the doing whatever is lawfull to be done, and has not any thing in it which can be properly call'd Sin.*] A fallacy the apter to be swallow'd down glibly, (and that by good *Logicians* too,) because it *delights* whom it *indangers*; and as it finds men *dispos'd* (yea greedily *willing*) to be *abus'd*, so it makes them *well-pleas'd* with the *hurt* it does them; as being *suitable* and *compliant* with all the *Appetites* of the *Flesh*. When men are tempted to do a thing which is not formally unlawfull, as being no where forbidden by God or Man, they will not be at the *pains* to *meditate* about the *Tendency* and *Byass* of such a thing. For it would rob them of the *pleasure* they take in Sin, if they should patiently admit but of this one Consideration, (which is commonly distastfull and irksom to them,) That there was hardly ever any *unlawfull* thing, which did not arise from the

the *Admission* of something or other that was *lawfull.* Yea that sometimes the *greatest* and *damning'st Sins* have taken Rise from the *least* and *most contemptible Occasions.* I shall at once make it *plain* and *usefull* too by some examples; and that especially out of Good will unto the younger, and more illiterate, and less considering part of Those that shall chance to read me.

§ 13. No doubt 'twas *lawfull* enough for *Eve*, at least to *look upon* the fruit which was forbidden, (for God forbad her onely to *eat* it;) And as *lawfull* for her it was, to lend the Serpent an empty *hearing*; (that is to say, upon condition she did not give him her *Assent* too:) But how much happier had it been, if, like *Ulysses* in the *Odysses*, she had *stopt* her very *ears* against the Voice of That *Charmer*, and had not suffer'd her self to *look?* For her *Eye* and her *Ear* became the *Panders* to her *Palate*, and then her *Palate* betray'd her *Heart.* Holy men have This property, (says *Gregory* the *Great*,) *Quòd ut semper ab illicitis longè sint, à se plerumque etiam licita abscindunt*; *That they may still be far enough from doing any thing unlawfull, they abstain from many things which are lawfull too.* Certainly *Job* could be no such *Ideot*,

Greg. Mag. *Dial. l.* 4. *c.* 11. *fol.* 37.

Ideot, as to think it a thing *unlawfull* for a man to *look* upon a Maid, who yet did *covenant not to do it*, not onely with his *Heart*, but with his *Eyes* too. Nor may we think it was for nothing, that S. *Paul* so solemnly did distinguish betwixt things *lawfull*, and things *expedient*: clearly intimating unto us, that there are very many things to be left *undone*, not because they are *unlawfull*, but onely because they are *unfit*; not because they *are* actuall Sins, but because they easily *may become* so; not because they are *vitious*, but *dangerous* things. And it belongs to *Circumspection* or *Christian Prudence*, to mind the *Counsells* of Scripture, as well as *Precepts*: as, not to approach the very *Door of an Harlot's House*; to *hate the* very *Garment spotted of the flesh*; and *not to stand in the way of Sinners*. We may not be Haunters of the *Tavern* and other places of *Debauch*, because there are *some* who come out *sober*; But rather of the two we must *beware* of such Places, because there are *others* who come out *drunk*. For 'tis a *mocking* of *God*, and a *reproaching* of *our selves* too, to *run* without warrant *upon Temptation*, and at the same time to pray, *Deliver us from evill*. We know that many most tender Parents correct their Children, not onely for doing what is

Prov. 5. 8.
Jude 23.
Psal. 1. 1.

morally evill, but meerly for coming in *Harm's way*; for not being ſo *Circumſpect*, as to be afraid before they are hurt. And though no doubt it is barely *lawfull*, for a man to *walk* upon a *Præcipice*, or to *ſtand* on a *Pinnacle* of the *Temple*; yet whoſoever dares do it deſerves a *Rod*. We cannot ſay it was *unlawfull* for *Herodias* to *dance*, or for *Herod* ſitting by to *behold* her *motions*; But yet *Herodias* and *Herod* were both deſervedly to be *blam'd*, becauſe if She had not *danc'd*, nor He *beheld* her, ſhe had not ſo eaſily (as ſhe did) *ſtoln* his *heart* out of his *Boſom*, and Then the Innocent *Baptiſt* had kept his *Head* upon his *Shoulders*. Will any man ſay it was *unlawfull*, for the women of *Iſrael* to *hold up* their *chins*, or ſet *one* foot before *another*? But yet God *ſmote* them with **ſcabbed heads*, becauſe *they minced their ſteps* as they went along, and becauſe they *walked* with *ſtretched-out Necks*. It was not certainly unlawfull for Mother *Monicha*, (the famous Mother of S. *Auguſtin*,) to drink a cup or two of *Wine* now and then with her Neighbours; But yet by little and little *practice* grew into a *Cuſtom*; and *Cuſtom* juſtled out *Judgment*; and ſo ſhe grew out of *Permiſſion*, into *Delight*; an arrant *Wine-bibber* at laſt, and vulgarly *known* ſo to be; ſadly

* Iſa. 3. 16, 17.

ſadly purchaſing unto her ſelf the odious Title of *Meribibula*. Which, without more Examples, may ſerve to teach us, with what kind of *Circumſpection* we ought to *walk*, to ſave our ſelves as from the *Mixture*, ſo from the *Neighbourhood* of evill.

§ 14. And being thus far ſecur'd from the two grand Fallacies of which I ſpake, with which there is hardly any thing commoner than for Chriſtians to *couzen* and *cheat Themſelves*; We have found the way to *walk circumſpectly* by the Rules of *Conſcience*, and of *Diſcretion*; or (as our Apoſtle does here expreſs it) not as *Fools*, but as *Wiſe*. And truly upon a ſuppoſal, that as many as have *heard*, have alſo *minded* what I have ſpoken, I think I have ſpoken at leaſt enough of the *prævious part* of my Deſign, which was onely to diſcourſe of *Circumſpection in Theſi*. To conſider it *in Hypotheſi*, 'twill properly belong to another Text, and muſt therefore be deferr'd till another Time.

OF CIRCUMSPECTION *In HYPOTHESI.*

MATTH. 24. 4.

Take heed that no man deceive you.

§ 1. THE words in general are the* *Preface* of our Saviour's *Answer* to his Disciples. Their *Question* was, *what the Signs of his Coming should be*, (v. 3.) Which *Coming* of his having a double Signification, either the *end of the Age*, (as the *Greek* imports,) or else the *end of the World*, (as we commonly read in our *English* Bibles,) This *Inquiry* of the Disciples may have in proportion *a double Prospect*. The *first* and more *immediate* on the *Destruction* of the *Jews*; the *second* and more *remote* on *the Day of Judgment*. And 'tis possible that the

* *Non primis verbis respondet ad ea de quibus fuerat interrogatus; sed illud primum admonet, quod in primis fuerat observandum, nè impostoris hominum abducamur à fide.* Clarius *in locum.*

Prognosticks our Saviour gives them may be equally appliable to Both acceptions of his *Coming*; as well to *the Scepter's departing from Judah*, which in the Prophecy of *Jacob* should be when *Shiloh* was fully *come*, as to *the End of All things*, when *Christ* shall *come* with *his Holy Angels*, to *judge the Secrets of all mens Hearts*.

I have so very good Authority for *Both* these Notions, that I am not very willing to leave out *either*, although I cannot but in Judgment prefer the *first*: and that as for *many* other reasons, (too many, and too long to be here inserted,) so more particularly for *one*, in which the words of *This Text* are more particularly concern'd. For I observe Three *Periods* or *Parts of Time*, pointed at by our Saviour in several parts of this Chapter: in the first of which he gives warning of *bare Deceivers*, (v. 5.) in the second of *false Prophets*, (v. 11.) in the third of *false Christs*, (v. 24.) such as would set forth themselves in so *plausible* a *manner*, with so *bewitching* a *Parade*, and such astonishing advantages of *Signs and Wonders*, *as to deceive* (*if it were possible*) *the very Elect*, had not our Saviour countermin'd them with an ἰδὲ προείρηκα, *Behold, I have told you before* they

V. Tertull. *de Præscript. adversus Hæres. cap.* 45.

they come, (v. 25.) and with a βλέπετε in my Text, *Take heed that no man deceive you.*

§ 2. Now if to satisfie the Desire and Curiosity of the *Inquisitive*, I may examin and give account, who the *Deceivers*, and the *false Prophets*, and the *false Christs* were *by Name*, whom our Lord in this Text may seem in particular to *intend* or *allude unto*; The first I find was * *Simon Magus*, who call'd Himself *The Power of God*; and *Helena*, his Harlot, A piece of Deity, flown forsooth from *His Bosom*. He was a very bewitching Sorcerer, in great Esteem with the Emperour *Claudius*, and worshipt by many as *a God*. Nor would he be thought to be onely *one*, but *every* Person in the Trinity; The *Father* in *Samaria*, The *Son* in *Judæa*, The *Holy Ghost* among the *Gentiles*. Yet This was That *Simon* who is said to have *believed*, and by the Sacrament of *Baptism* had been admitted into the Church. *Act.* 8. 13. Such another was *Dositheus*, who call'd himself *The very Christ*. A third was *Menander*, who would needs have been thought The common *Saviour of the world*. A fourth was *Barchochebas*, who preached up himself as *The Messias* that was to come, and whom the *Jews* were Followers of, as of I know not what *Star dropt down from Heaven*. These were

* Origen *contra Cels. l.* 2. Act. 8. 10. Euseb. *Hist. Eccl. l.* 2. *c.* 12. *& l.* 3. *c.* 20. *& l.* 4. *c.* 6. *A Claudio Cæs. honoratus, à multis quasi Deus glorificatus esse dicitur. Docuit se esse qui inter Judæos quasi Filius apparuerit, in Samaria quasi Pater descenderit, & in reliquis gentibus quasi Sp. Sanctus adventaverit.* Helenam *primam ejus ἔννοιαν fuisse dixit, & generâsse Angelos & Potestates per quas Mundum hunc factum esse ait.* Iren. *l.* 1. *c.* 20.

were *properly *false Christs*. Then for *Deceivers* and false *Prophets*, who are alluded to in the Text, I shall but name some of the Chief. One was *Theudas* in the Time of *Claudius*, who pretended to separate the Waters of *Jordan*, as *Moses* Those of the *Red Sea*. *Ægyptius* was another in the Time of *Nero*, who (with 30000 Followers) was by *Felix* cut off at the Mount of *Olives*. A third was *Ebion*, who contended that *Jesus Christ* was an *arrant Man*, the offspring of *Joseph* as well as *Mary*. * A fourth was *Cerinthus*, who taught his Followers to expect a *Thousand years of Sensuality*, which (forsooth) were to commence from after the general Resurrection. (The like to which was said of *Papias*, who had been Scholar to S. *John*.) A fift was the Sect of the *Nicolaitans*, who exhorted their Disciples to the *promiscuous use* of *Wives*. A sixt was *Carpocrates*, and all *his Gnosticks*, (for *Nicolaus* bred *some*, and [a] *Valentinus* bred *others*,) who commended *Uncleanness*, as one *great Requisite* to Man's *Redemption*. (meaning his being freed from his *Confinement* to The Body.) A seventh was [b] *Basilides*, who held it lawfull in Times of Triall, to renounce the Doctrin of the Gospel, and did set up in *Ægypt* an open School of this Heresie: which

* Πᾶς ὃς ἂν μὴ ὁμολογῇ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθέναι, Ἀντίχριστός ἐστι. Polycarp. *ad Philippens.* p. 20. 1 Joh. 4. 3. Euseb. *l.* 2. *c.* 20. Iren. *l.* 1. *c.* 25. *&* *l.* 3. *c.* 3.

* Euseb. *l.* 3. *c.* 23.

Iren. *l.* 1. *c.* 1. *&* *c.* 24.

* Epiph. *Hær.* 20.

[a] Hieron. *lib. de Script. Eccles.* Augustin. *Hær.* 6.

[b] Euseb. *l.* 4. *c.* 7. *&* *l.* 6. *c.* 28.

which was afterwards espoused by the * *Helchesaitæ*. An eighth was *Saturninus*, who did the like to this in *Syria*. And though some of these did flourish *after* the sacking of *Jerusalem*, yet the *Jews* received *Massacres* even *after* that time of their *Desolation*. Witness *That* in the Days of *Hadrian*, whereof *Barchochebas* was the occasion. For God it seems had design'd them to such an absolute παναλεθρία, such a *Consumption of the whole*, that even their *Ruins* were to be *levell'd*, and their *Graves buried*. They were prohibited by *Hadrian*, to do so much as to *look* on their Native Country. Yea *Jerusalem* was decree'd to be called *Ælia*, and its *Name* to be blotted out from the Common *Register* of *Time*. So that *All* those *Deceivers* I just now mention'd, were either the *Harbingers*, or the *Attendants*, of That so matchless a *Devastation*; and did *literally* fulfill this famous Prediction of our Lord, in the 5th. the 11th. and 24th. verses of this Chapter.

* Euseb. *ibid.* Iren. l. c. 1. 22. 23.

Judæis nec Advenarum jure Terram patriam saltem vestigio salutare conceditur. Tertull. *in Apol. c.* 21. *p.* 45. Euseb. *l.* 4. *c.* 6.

§ 3. All which being premis'd by way of *general Explication*, may serve to guide our Attentions into Three Subjects of Discourse.

First, an *Heedfulness*, and *Prudence*, to which our Saviour thought fit to exhort his *first Followers*; the Exhortation as it were reaching,

through *Them*, to *Us*. βλέπετε, *See*, or *Take heed*.

Secondly, the *Danger*, or *Ground* of *fear*, which more particularly calls for this Christian Prudence. To wit, the *Multitude* of *Deceivers* gone abroad into the World; which by their *Subtilty*, and their *Number*, will be so likely to prevail, that there is no little need of our greatest Care, μή τις ἡμᾶς πλανήσῃ, lest any *Man* deceive us.

Lastly, the *Time* is very observable, wherein the *use* of this *Care* will be most in *Season*: and this we may gather from the Context to be before a *Destruction of Church and State*. For *Imposture* and *Deceit* will be *Then* most *rife*, and therefore the *Prudence* of a Christian will be *Then* most *needfull*.

The *first* Observable of the Three I have insisted upon at large on *another Text*; whereon I shew'd the strict necessity of *circumspect Walking* in the *Generall*, in respect of *evil Things*, and all that have *Tendency* unto evil.

It now remains that I proceed to the *second* Observable I propos'd; and so to consider *Circumspection* or *Christian Prudence*, as relating in *Particular* to the Deceitfulness of *Persons*. Nor can it be severely imputed to me, if still I continue to deal in *Caveats*. For,

§ 4. If ever there were an *Errour* to be *commended*

mended out of a ***Pulpit***, it is the *right-handed* Errour of *too much Caution*. And if ever there can be *any*, *This* is certainly the *Time*, when no *abundance* of *Caution* can be *too much*. When perhaps the very *greateſt* a man can *uſe*, may prove the very *leaſt* he ſhall ſtand in *need of*. At leaſt I take This to be a ſatisfactory reaſon, why having ſpoken enough already of Chriſtian Prudence *in Theſi*, I am led by the love of Method to conſider it alſo *in Hypotheſi*; as it ſtands in relation to this or that Station and State of *Men*. For as *Charity* is the *greateſt* of Chriſtian Vertues, ſo (in a ſecular Conſideration) 'tis the moſt *dangerous*, and *enſnaring*, and the moſt *difficult to be managed* of all our Duties; becauſe it has *This* peculiar to it, *that it thinketh no evill; but beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* (1 *Cor.* 13. 5, 7.) I will not ſay it is the *weakneſs* or *fault* of Charity to be *Credulous*; But yet expoſing its *owners* to many *Riſques*, and *Inconveniences*, it ſtands in need of great ***Prudence*** to keep it *ſafe*. The Diſciples therefore did very wiſely, in being *afraid* and *ſuſpicious* of ***Paul himſelf***, till *Barnabas* gave him a *Teſtimonial*, that by his *preaching boldly at Damaſcus*, and by his *diſputing againſt* Act. 9. 26. ver. 27, 29.

the Græcians, he prov'd himself an *unfeigned Convert:* as if the *repentance* of an *Enemy* were never to be *trusted* untill 'tis *try'd*; nor any *other Triall* could be *sufficient*, but That of *bringing forth fruits meet for repentance.* Our Joh.2.23,24. Blessed Saviour himself would not *entrust himself with some who believed in him*; because he *knew* their *Belief* was such, as would not *bear* any *stress* in a time of *Triall.* Seeing the *Miracles which he did*, they *believ'd in his Name:* but he *knew* that they were not *Temptation-proof*; that they would not *hold out* at his *Crucifixion.* How much more might his *Apostles* be distrustfull of Believers, who knew them *not?* And yet so *unguarded* was their *Simplicity*, (I mean the Simplicity of the *heart*, not of the *head*, or the *understanding*; as opposed onely to *knavery*, and not to *knowledge*;) that they made their *own* Innocence the usual measure of *other mens.* Hence it was that their *Master* * Matth. 10. 16. did call them * *Sheep*; because they knew not, till he had told them, that they were going out *as Sheep in the midst of Wolves.* And the more he had observ'd they were *unapt* to be *suspicious*, by so much the rather did he exhort them to use the *wisedom* of the *Serpent*, whereby to set a constant *Guard* upon the *Innocence* of the *Dove.*

Dove. For as *Wisedom* is * *devillish*, without *Simplicity*, so *This*, without *Wisedom*, is never *safe*. It is the *property* of the *one*, *not* to *do* any Injury, and the *benefit* of the *other*, is *not* to *suffer* it. Indeed as *Fear* is oppos'd to *Fortitude*, it is a *childish unmanlike* Passion; still *betraying those succours which reason offereth*. Again, as *Fear* is oppos'd to *Faith*, it is an *heathenish* and *carnal* Passion; That that made so many *Compliers* in the evil days pass'd, with the *Spirit which Then was working in the* prosperous *Children of Disobedience*. But as *Fear* is oppos'd to *Folly*, (I mean *Imprudence*, and *want of Heed*,) it is at once a very *generous* and *Christian* Thing. There being no true *Faith*, no nor any true *Fortitude*, which has not a *mixture* of such a *Fear*. As *Fear* is opposite to *Reliance* and *Trust in God*, it is indeed a *great* Duty to *laugh* at Danger: But as 'tis opposite to *Rashness* and a *defect* of *Circumspection*, it is as much a man's duty to provide *against* danger by timely *fear*. For the same Spirit that saith by the Royal Priest, *Fear not them that can kill the body*, does also say by the Royal Preacher, *Happy is the man that feareth always*. All which being compared with the Importance of my *Text*; and the

* Jam. 3. 15.

Wisd. 17. 12.

Eph. 2. 2.

Matth. 10. 28.

Prov. 28. 14.

evill of *those* days, which in the Context are spoken of, being duly compar'd with *these* I speak in, (for in truth the *whole Chapter* which lies before us may very well serve for an *English Mirroir*, wherein our Modern Deceivers may partly *see* how they look;) I think I may say (without impertinence) to the most *prudent* Congregation, what our *Saviour* esteemed *needfull*, not onely *pertinent* to his Disciples, βλέπετε, *See*, or *take heed*: and βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῶ πλανᾶσθαι, Take heed ye be not *deceived*: and βλέπετε μή τις, Take heed that *no man* deceive you.

§ 5. That thus the Emphasis is to be put, I am confirm'd in my opinion from *other* words of our Lord to his 12 Apostles, when being about to send them abroad to an inhospitable world, he did not speak in this manner, (which yet he might very well have done,) *Beware of those fooliſh and hurtfull Lusts, which drown the Soul in misery and perdition.* Nor did he choose to say Thus, (which he might very well have done too,) *Beware of the Inticements of worldly Greatneß*, of *Riches*, and *Pleasure*, and *Reputation*. He did not say, (with S. *Paul*,) *Beware of Dogs*; Nor yet, (with S. *Peter*,) *Beware of Devils*: But (as a greater Mischief than either,) *Beware of Men.*

Men. (*Matth.* 10. 17.) For as Deceitfulness, and Fraud, and all the dire effects thereof, do give us a very true Character of the *Greater* World; so *Man*, being a *little* world, is a little *world* of *Deceits* too. The falsest *Crocodile* in *Ægypt* is not *Hypocrite enough* to become his *Embleme*. The reason is, because the *best* things debaucht are the most *transcendent evils*. Those *Angels* that fell from as high as *Heaven*, could not therefore fall less, than as *low* as *Hell*. And so *Angelical* was the Nature of Man *undeprav'd*, by injoying a Rectitude both of *Intellect* and *Will*, that he admitted not of a *middle* betwixt a *Devil*, and a *Saint*. So that Man's being the *worst* on this side *Hell*, as well as the *best* of God's Creatures on this side *Heaven*, does help to *adjust* and *reconcile* the seeming *contradictory* Proverbs, * *Homo Homini Deus*, and *Homo Homini Diabolus*. *Man* to *Man* is a kind of *God*, and *Man* to *Man* is an arrant *Devil*. All the *rest* of our Fellow-creatures are very *innocent Neighbours*; Nay, whensoever we have occasion, they are our most obedient and faithfull *Servants*. But *Man* to *Man* (for the greatest part) is either a very *fierce Enemy*, and so the worst of *Wild* Beasts; or else a very *false Friend*, the worst of *Tame* ones.

§ 6. So

* Μηδὲν ἀστοιχειότερον ἀνθρώπου, μηδὲ ὠμότερον, ὅταν ἅπαξ ἀποθηριωθῇ. Polyb. *Hist.* l. 1. & Legat. 122.

Ὁ ἄνθρωπος παιδείας μὴ τυχὼν, ἀγριώτατον γίνεται πάντων, ὅσα γῆ τρέφει. Plato de Legibus l. 6.

Ὡς χαλεπὸν ἐς ἄνθρωπον, ἂν ἄνθρωπος ᾖ ... ὦ θηρῶν βέλτιστε μᾶλλον ἀνήμερε.

§ 6. So far therefore as we are *men*, I think our first and greatest *head* is to be taken for *our selves* against *our selves*. Not for *this* Reason onely, because we *love* our selves *most*, and so are *most* apt to *deceive* our selves; (the Devil commonly using *us*, as the Empress *Agrippina* her husband *Claudius*, whilst she poyson'd *That Dish*, with which she knew he was *most delighted*, and on which he was likely to make the *plentifullest Meal*;) But withall because the *Soul*, like the *Eye* of Man, is *least* of all able to *see itself*. And this I think the *best* Moral, (though I know there is *another*,) of *Diodorus* his Mythology concerning *Lamia*, who did *put on* her *Eyes*, when she went *abroad*; but always coming *home*, *put them up* into her pocket. We are blind to the greatest *Beam*, if it be in our *own* Eye, though we can *spy* the least *Mote* in *another man's*. Nor is it onely the *Eye*, but *the Heart of man* also (if we believe the Prophet *Jeremy*) *is deceitfull above all things*. And this is that which makes him his own *worst cheat*; whilst either he falls *without* a Tempter, like *Lucifer* in *heaven*; or else (like *Peter* upon *earth*) he is *endanger'd* by a *temptation* from the meer *Confidence* of his *safety*. Amongst a Thousand which might be given, I cannot name a fitter

'Εμυθολόγησάν τινες ὡς εἰς μάρσιπον ἐμβάλοι τοὺ ὀφθαλμοὺς, &c. Diod. Sic. *l.* 20. *p.* 778.

Jer. 17. 9.

a fitter Instance of *Self-Deceiving*, than that of *Eldavid* the *Fanatick* in *Rabbi Moſche Ben Maiemon:* who was ſo very *ſincere* a Cheat in the couzenage of himſelf, and did ſo ſeriouſly *believe* he was the *Prodromus* of the *Meſſias*, that he offer'd to be *try'd* by a *Decollation*, and died a *Martyr* to his *Deluſions*. So much 'tis every man's duty to *fear Himſelf*, and to *ſuſpect* his *own* **Phantaſie**, or *Imagination*, which he takes to be his *judgment* in divers caſes.

Vid. Buxtorph. *Theſaur. Lingu. Hebr. qui hiſtoriam recenſet integram ex libro* Shevet Jehuda.

§ 7. Next and immediately after *our ſelves*, we muſt be circumſpect and wiſe in reſpect of *one another*. And as of other men in *generall*, (for this very reaſon that they are *Men*,) ſo of *Thoſe* in ſpecial manner whom we have moſt of all *truſted*, and moſt *obliged*; who have mingl'd their *Projects* and *Prayers* with us; who have eaten of our bread, and as it were lain in our very Boſoms; who are apt to *hate* us for the favours they are *not able* to *requite*, and for *exceeding* their *Gratitude*, will not allow us their *Humanity*. Of ſuch ill-natur'd Creatures we read in *Tacitus*, *quibus beneficia eouſque læta, dum videntur exolvi poſſe; ſed ubi antevenêre, pro gratiâ odium redditur.* Little Curteſies and good turns they take very well, and are thankfull for: But when a Munificence

is excessive, and far beyond their possibility either to *recompense*, or *deserve*, Then they onely *love* the *benefits*, but perfectly *hate* the *Benefactor*, and wish Him Dead, because (according to that of *Aristotle*, αἰχμώς ὁ ἀνεργετέμενος,) as often as he sees them, he makes them blush. Now 'tis very sound arguing from the *Act* to the *Aptitude*; such Things there may be in these *our* days, because there were such in the days we *read of*. And *special* heed is to be taken that we be not deceived by such as *These*; because by *Courage* and *easie Caution* a man may be saved from his *Enemies*; But *God alone* can keep him safe from his dearest *Friends*. Thence

Jer. 9. 4,5,6. said God by the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not in any Brother: for every Brother will utterly supplant*; *and every Neighbour will walk with slanders*; *their habitation is in the midst of Deceit.*

Ecclus. 6. 13. So said *Jesus* the *Son of Sirach*, *Separate thy self from thine Enemies, and take heed of thy Friends.* *Julius Cæsar* was more endanger'd from *Brutus*, and *Cassius*, his *Bosom Friends*, than from *Antony*, and *Cato*, his *open Enemies*. *Pompey the Great* could never hurt him with *all* his *Armies*, because he was a *brave* and a *generous* Enemy. But his *Friends* were such *Flayls*, as against

againſt which there was *no Defenſe*. Even the *Serpent himſelf* was not more treacherous to *Eve*, than *Eve* was unto her *Husband*, and her *Husband* to his *poſterity*. For although ſhe derived *Her* Body from *His*, and ſo might ſeem in ſome regard to have been his own *Daughter*, before his *Wife*; (as it were joyn'd to him in Wedlock by a kind of *lawfull Inceſt*;) yet no ſooner had that Woman received *Life* from out his *Side*, than ſhe (in a lamentable Requitall) returned *Death* into his *Bowells*. *David* did not complain, *That an open Enemy had diſhonour'd him*, or *that an Adverſary had magnify'd himſelf againſt him*: for (ſaid he) *I could have born the one, and have hid my ſelf from the other*. But his *Cordolium* and his *out-cry* was againſt his *Companion*, and his *Guide*, with whom he *took ſweet Counſell, and walked with as with a Friend in the Houſe of God*. I wiſh it may prove a very groundleſs and weak Suggeſtion, that both our *Jeſuites*, and their *Journymen*, (paſſing commonly under the name of *fanatick Proteſtants*,) are by much the moſt *innocent*, becauſe they are ἐχθροὶ φανερόμυσοι, (as *Ariſtotle* words it) the moſt *undiſguiſed* and *barefac'd* Enemies, at once to the *Monarchy* and *Church* of *England*. Such as declare themſelves

Pſal. 55. 12, 13, 14.

Pſal. 41. 9.

selves in * *print* for the *Deposing* of our *Kings*, and the *Disposing* of their *Kingdoms*. In this respect the more *innocent*, that by professing themselves *implacable* and *ungainable* Antagonists, they give us an *Helmet* before they *strike*. We know the *Thirtieth* of *January* stands as execrably black in our *English Calendar*, as the *Fift* of *November* has ever done. Which proves the Truth of what was written by [a] *Isaac Casaubon* to *Heinsius* before our days, (and when the days were *less evil* than we have liv'd in,) that we have *Jesuited Protestants*, as well as *Papists*; equally *Haters* of the *Government* of *Church* and *State* here in *England*; equally poyson'd with an Opinion, that the worst of all Murthers is the most highly *meritorious*; equally *Practicers* and *Patrons* of That *Hildebrandine Divinity*, which has cost so many Monarchs their *Lives* and *Fortunes*. I say, 'twere *safer* than now it is, if *all* our Enemies were *such*, *ut professa prodant odia vindictæ locum*; that by knowing our *utmost Danger*, we might *Timely* stand upon our *Guard*. Were I at leisure to rifle Story, I could name several *Hundreds*, besides the Emperour *Darius*, and *Charles the first* of these Realms, who were *betray'd* by those most, in whom they most *trusted*: and whilst they thought the

* *Confer* Euchananum, & Junium Brutum, *cum Catalogo Scriptorum apud* Is. Casaub. *Epist. ad* Frontonem Ducæum. *præsertim p.* 11, 12, 14.

a *Beatum illum, qui non vidit mala Patriæ quæ parant duo genera hominum, Jesuitæ τὸ σύγιον γένος, & οἱ ἐν τῇς ἡμετέρεις Ἰησουίζοντες. Deus misereatur Ecclesiæ suæ.* Casaub. *Epist.* 116. *Confer etiam* Thuani *l.* 54. *A D.* 1572. *cum ejusdem l.* 17. *A. D.* 1556. & *l.* 18. *A.D.* 1557.

the best way to *make* men Loyall, was *not to doubt* of their being *such*, most unhappily have *died* by their *Credulity*. It is indeed a very generous and Princely Errour, (as being the Errour of a Great and a Candid Soul,) not at all to be capable of Fears and Jealousies; and rather to run the greatest Hazards, than either to fear, or to be fear'd. But yet the oftener I reflect upon what was once said by *a Duke of Florence*, [That *He reckon'd All Subjects, who were Principl'd by the Jesuits, would rebell if they could, and therefore* (said he) *for mine, let them do it if they can*;] And comparing therewith the several Caveats of our Lord, *Be wise as Serpents, Beware of Men*; And considering that *Distrustfulness* is the chief *Wisedom* of the *Serpent*, as well as a necessary *Safeguard* to the *Simplicity* of the *Dove*; Lastly, the less I have been able to free my self from an opinion, that in the Wariness of the Prince the People's Interest and Safety does chiefly stand, (for sure it is our greatest Interest, *not to be able to be damn'd* for our *Disobedience*, and, by a consequence unavoidable, *not to be able to Disobey* the Lord of Hosts in his Vicegerents,) the more I think there is place for an *Epichanus*, to bring That Motto to Remembrance,

[μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, that is,] *forget not to be Distrustfull.*

§ 8. And as of all *other* friends, so *above all* beware of *Them*, who pretend a Friendship unto the *Soul*. For there is *no Devil* to the *white* one. That *Serpent* is the most *deadly*, which covers over his malice with the seeming *simplicity* of a *Dove*. A *Wolf* is ever most *Ravenous*, when cloath'd in *sheep-skin*. Nor is there any such dangerous *Highway-Thief*, as he who follows that trade in the Reverend Habit of a *Priest*. There are no Jugglers in the world to be compar'd with *false Teachers*; those *Spiritual purloyners*, who commit a kind of *Burglary* upon mens *Souls*, and even *plunder* their very *Consciences*; who first *steal* into their *Heads*, and carry away from thence their *true Opinions* in point of *faith*; then creep into their *Hearts*, and *steal* away from thence their *right Affections* in point of *practice*. Such as these heretofore were *Nestorius*, *Photinus*, and *Apollinaris*. All three very *learned* and *frequent* Preachers, of eminent *wit*, and *elocution*, highly *approved* by the Clergy, as well as *admired* by all the *people*, untill infected with an *Itch* to be the *Authors* of so many *Sects*, or the *Heads* of so many *Factions*, they polluted all their Excellencies

Matth. 7. 15.

Vincent. Lirin. *cap.* 17, 18, 19.

lencies with the *Leprosie* of *Errour*; and of *three* great *Shepherds* became *three Dogs*, whose constant business was nothing else, but to be *barking* and *snarling* against the *Truth*. *Photinus* (even with *vehemence*) against the *Trinity* of the *Godhead*; *Nestorius* against the *Unity* of our Saviour's *Person*; and lastly, *Apollinaris* against the *Duality* of his *Nature*.

§ 9. From whose examples we may learn, not onely to beware of such as *creep into Houses*, and there *lead captive* those *Silly women*, who again do lead captive their *Silly men*; But of such as *domineer* in their factious *pulpits*, and like the great *Red Dragon* in the *Revelation*, do *draw after their Tail*, perhaps *a whole third part of the Stars of Heaven*. (I cannot be thought to speak of *fixt*, but of *erratick* and *wandring Stars*.) The *common* fallacies of the world do onely couzen the peoples *senses*, and so impose upon their *Reason*. But *these* at first dash do even bewitch their very *reason*, and so beguile them of their *Religion*. A *spiritual Cheat*, or *false Teacher*, is so incomparably *hurtfull*; (especially when his false and seditious Doctrin is such as easily runs out at his fingers ends,) that *Lucifer himself*, to become *such*, did first of all turn *Devil*. For as if his *Devilship* were his

2 Tim. 3. 6.

Rev. 12. 3.

his *Qualification*, He was first an *Apostate*, and then a *Preacher*. The forbidden *Tree* was his *Text*, forbidden *Knowledge* was his *Doctrin*, Horrid *Rebellion* was his *Use*, and so he concluded with just *Damnation*.

§ 10. Now we shall find such Impostors to have been *still* very *rife*, whether we look into the *Jewish*, or *Christian* Church.

In the *Jewish* it is observable, that for *one Elijah*, (that *man of God*,) the Prophets of *Baal* were *four hundred and fifty*. For *one Micaiah*, who propheſied *Truth*, four hundred there were that dawb'd with *untemper'd Morter*. The ways of Apostasy in *Israel* were chiefly two. The first was the way of *Jeroboam*, who ador'd the true God, but in the similitude of a *Calf*; nor that at *Jerusalem*, but *Dan and Bethel*. In *that* lay his *Heresie*, in *this* his *Schism*. The second way was the way of *Ahab*; who besides the publick worship, common to *him* with *Jeroboam*, did farther worship his *Baalims* or *Godlings* also. Now there was never any *Apostasy*, no nor *Idolatry* in *Israel*, in which their *False Prophets* had not still a great hand. No nor any false Prophets who propheſied *Lies*, but they pretended to derive them from the *mouth* of *Truth*. The work of *Satan* still was done

1 Kin. 18. 22.

ch. 22. v. 6, 8.

in

in *Jehovah*'s name. An example of which we have 1 *King.* 22. where though *Ahab*'s lying Prophets were Prophets of *Baal*, yet still they usher'd in their falsehoods with a [*Thus saith the Lord.*]

Come we hastily from the *Jewish* to the *Christian* Church, which we shall find to have been infested, from her first **Infancy* and *Childhood*, with such *Deceivers*. A *Simon Magus* was found at *Rome*, to resist the doctrins of S. *Peter*; An *Apollonius* also at *Ephesus*, to check the preachings of S. *John*. Besides *Menander*, and *Cerinthus*, *Barchochebas*, and *Dositheus*, *Carpocrates*, and *Ebion*, *Saturninus*, and *Basilides*, and the most venemous Crew as well of *Gnosticks*, as *Nicholaitans*, (whereof the greatest part did flourish in the Apostles own times, and all pretended to be *Reformers*,) there were not wanting amongst the *Heathen*, who did endeavour the setting up a *New Messias* of their *own*; and that by craftily diverting the cleerest prophecies of the *Old Testament*, from that natural Aspect which they all fasten upon the *New*. *Justin Martyr* in his *Paræneſis* to the *Emperour Antonine*, does make this appear by an Induction of particulars. That famous prophecy (for example) of dying *Jacob*, [*The Scepter shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come*,

* 2 Thess. 2. 7.

V. Justin Mart. παραιν. πρὸς Ἀντ. p. 70, &c.

come, binding his Asse's Colt unto the choice Vine, and washing his Cloaths in the blood of Grapes, Gen. 49. 11.] which is so manifestly fulfilled in *Jesus Christ* the *Son* of *God*, The Heathen Greeks apply'd to *Bacchus*, their Son of *Jupiter*; not onely because his *Rites* were solemnized with an *Ass*, and because he was worshipped as the *God* of the *Vintage*; but because he was feign'd to have been *torn in pieces, to have suffer'd many things, and to have enter'd into Glory.* So what is spoken by the Prophets of our Saviour's *riding into Jerusalem upon an Ass*, (Zech.9.9.) They apply to *Bellerophon* (another *Son* of their *Jupiter*) riding to Heaven upon *Pegasus*, a *winged Horse.* And that prædiction of *Isaias* concerning *a Virgin's bringing forth*, (Isa.7.14.) They will needs apply to *Danae* in the Brazen Tower; where having carefully been *sequestred* from the *Society* of *men*, and yet for all that grown *big* of *Perseus*, she got the fabulous repute of a *Mother-Maid.* So that passage of the *Psalmist*, [*He rejoyced as a Giant to run his course*, Psal. 19.5.] Those Idolatrous Greeks apply to *Hercules*, whom they affirm to have *ran* through all the *habitable world.* And those distinct prædictions of the Prophet *Esa* touching our Saviour's *healing Virtue*

Virtue over *all manner* of *Diseases*, they apply to *Æsculapius*, their *God of Physick*. Not to be endless in particulars, All the *Prophecies* of our *Messias*, excepting that of his *Crucifixion*, (which their Poets could never parallel in all their fabulous *Sons* of *Jupiter*,) have by the wicked Ingeny of *Deceivers*, been profanely misapply'd to the *bolstering up* of their *Idolatries*, and that by having been wrested from those *Completions* they all do find in our Blessed Saviour. Insomuch as *without*, and *within* the Church, both under the *Law*, and under the *Gospel*, This has ever been a *pertinent*, if not a *necessary* Caveat, *Be wise as Serpents*; *Beware of Men*; or βλέπετε μή τις, *Take ye heed that no man deceive you.*

§ 11. We stand in need of This Caveat, in respect of *All* Persons without exception: not onely of the *worst*, but the *Best* of men. For as the *worst* may deceive us by their very *good Words*, so may the *Best* of men too (though without any design, and even before they are aware,) by their *evil Deeds*.

To begin with the *worst*, let us first of all attend unto that Caveat of S. *Paul* to his *Ephesians*, *Let no man deceive you with vain words*. A Caveat extended to many things of great moment, however expressed by our Apostle in the Eph. 5. 6.

stile of *vain words.* He does not mean by *vain words*, such as are but *unprofitable* and *impertinent* to the Hearers ; such as are to no end, and purpose : but such as are *filthy* as well as *foolish* ; and withall such as are *false*, or *fallacious* words. Such as blind a man's Judgment ; such as pervert his Understanding ; such as impose upon his Reason ; such as mislead him from the true Faith ; and even couzen him of his Religion. In all these respects, though in the *last above* all, S. *Paul* is carefull that his *Ephesians* be not deceiv'd with *vain words.*

They who call *foolish* or *filthy Talking*, by the plausible names of *Facetiousness*, or *Drollery*, *Urbanity*, or *Burlesque*, are the first sort of such as do *deceive with vain words.* These are called by the Greeks γελοτοποιοὶ, and by the Latines *Ridicularii*, in French and English, *Drolls*, and *Railleurs*; such as think it a mark of *Wit*, never to speak a *serious* word, but to turn all into *Ridicule.* By *foolish talking and jesting*, (two words for one thing) is meant such *insipid* and *unsavory* discourse, as has not in it any *Salt* either of *Charity* or of *Prudence* to make it usefull. 'Tis true that *Aristotle* does reckon εὐτραπελίαν (which is here S. *Paul*'s word) a *Semivertue* in Conversation. But being usually coupled with *Scurrility*, or *Obscœneness*, or some degree

degree of *Profanation*, (for *mala ſunt vicina bonis*,) it is *prohibited*, and *condemn'd*, and heavily *cenſur'd* by our Apoſtle, as inconſiſtent with the *ſerioufneſs* and the *gravity* of a Chriſtian, whoſe *Converſation* ſhould *be in heaven*, and his *Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*; not in jeſting, and buffonery. Mortification and Repentance and Amendment of life ſhould be His *Buſineſs*; and Praiſing God his *Recreation*. The Study and Contemplation both of the *Wiſedom*, and the *Will*, and the *Word* of God, ſhould be his *Labour*, and his *Divertiſement*, his daily *Exerciſe* and *Delight*. To them that place their preſent happineſs in the contrary to This, in *ſparing nothing* to break a Jeſt, neither the holy Word of God, nor the good Names of Men, nor the modeſt Ears of Women, but ſacrifice all conſiderations to *Sport* and *Laughter*, as to the *Idol* they moſt *adore*, To Them our Lord's Denuntiation belongs of right, *Wo be to Them that laugh, for they ſhall mourn and weep*. As for ſuch things as Theſe, impious Jeſts to cauſe laughter, and *filthy Talking*, (v. 4.) *let no man deceive us*, (ſaith S. *Paul*,) as if they were altogether *Venial*, and ſuch as eaſily conſiſt with a Chriſtian ſtate: For even *becauſe of Theſe things*, (as arrant Trifles and Peccadilloes, as by too many they may be thought,) *ver. 6.*

thought,) *the wrath of God cometh upon the children of Diſobedience*, either in This, or the World to come.

Again, *Let no man deceive us with vain words*, that is, with *falſe* ones (ſaith *Eſtius*,) or with *fallacious* ones (ſaith *Menochius*.) And ſo the Caveat is extenſible to All the Deceitfulneſſes of Men, who with the Sophiſtry of words, or *the words of man's Wiſedom*, (which is the wiſedom of the Fleſh,) ſeek to impoſe upon the *Conſciences* and *minds* of thoſe they ſpeak to. As in calling *vitious Fear* by the Name of *Prudence*; in calling *Avarice*, *Frugality*; *Luxury*, *Nobleneſs*; *Lightneſs*, *Affability*; *Ambition*, *Greatneſs of Soul*; *Sheepiſhneſs*, *Humility*; *Inſultation*, *Courage*; and deviliſh *Envy*, *Hatred of Evil*. For now and then a great *Vice* does ſo Ape-out *Vertue*, and ſeveral *Vertues* in ſome degrees do ſo *border* upon *Vice*, that for want of due *Heed* to the *vain words* of men, many miſtake them for one another. Let no man therefore deceive us (as many will, unleſs we ſtand upon our Guard,) by giving *vain Subtilty* the name of *Wiſedom*; and *Cruelty* the name of *Corrective Juſtice*; by calling *Raſhneſs*, *Reſolution*; and *Giddineſs*, *Zeal*: Let no man lead us into *Intemperance*, under the ſtile of *Good-*

Goodfellowship; nor seek to lessen the guilt of *Wantonness*, by its being intitl'd *a Trick of youth*; nor withdraw our *Obedience* to publick *Parents*, in pretense of *Sacrifice* to *God*; no nor our *Sacrifice* to *God*, (when That is due,) because *Obedience* indeed is *better*. Let no man persuade us to leave *undone* the *smallest* Duties, under colour of our *doing* the *weightier* matters of the Law; nor wilfully to admit of a *lesser* Sin, in a sophistical Pretense of avoiding *greater*. For That saying of *Aristotle*, τὰ ἐλάχιστα λυπηρὸν κακῶν, *that of two Evils the least is to be chosen*, is not meant of two *Moral*, but of two *Physical*, or *civil* Evils. 'Tis true when *two Evils* are Both of *Punishment*, or when of any *two Evils*, the one is of *Sin*, and the other of *Affliction*, Reason prompts us to choose the lesser. But of two *moral Evils*, or of two *formal Sins*, Religion bids us choose *neither*: But rather suffer the *greatest* evil, than submit to do the *least*.

§ 12. Should I adventure to reflect upon *all sorts* of Men of this first rank, of whom an *heed* is to be taken in this last Age, (though this at first was my Design,) I should heedlesly ingage in a new Sea of matter, and wear out the Patience of all that hear me. I shall therefore choose

chooſe to ſpend the little Remainder of my time, in giving notice of two or three of the moſt *plauſible Deceivers*, which ſeem to have had the chiefeſt hand in all the Miſeries of the late Times. For till the *Errours* they have *ſown*, and ſometimes *planted*, be *rooted* out of the people's Minds, I cannot imagin how it is poſſible to *keep* our Peace any *longer*, than whilſt the perſons ſo imbued want Power to *break* it.

§ 13. Take we heed then in the *next* place of ſuch Deceivers, as ſow the ſeeds of *Diſcontent* in their credulous Congregations, by feeding the People with Apprehenſions, fears, and jealouſies, of *Superſtition*, and *Popery*, and *impoſitions upon Religion by the Commandments of Men.* This has been a ſore Evil under the Sun, (ever ſince the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*,) by *fictitious* and *pretended*, to make a Broad way for *real* Popery. When a Proteſtant reſolves to *eſpouſe* a *Schiſm*, a Separation from the *moſt perfect* of *Proteſtant Churches* in the World, He *muſt* accuſe her either of *Popery*, or of *Papiſtical Inclinations*, for fear of being found out by all, to *drive a Trade* of Animoſities, either for *Revenge*, or for *filthy Lucre*; or for fear of being known to be Satan's chief Journy-man, in being paſſio-

passionately *amorous* of breeding *Hatreds*, and a *Lover* of *Schism* as it is *Schism*. Neither *Christ* nor his *Apostles* were used *otherwise* or *worse* than the Church of *England*, whose *Accusations* were *adapted* to their *Enemies Ends*, which were onely *to make them odious*, and thorowly *fitted* for *Destruction*; as far from *Truth*, or *Probability*, as *Truth* can possibly be from *Falshood*. Nor could it sure be more impossible, that *Christ himself*, blessed for ever, should be a *Conjurer*, or a *Glutton*, (who yet was accused of being *Both*,) than that *His Spouse the Church of England* should be *Popishly affected*, whose *first Reformers* were *put* to *Death* for *resisting* Popery, and whose *Sons* at this day are the Sole Persons that *keep it out*, and whose *Communion* is *detested* by none so much as the *Popish* Party, who are not wont to *hate* men for their *kind affections*. A man would think that *all Protestants* should *unite* themselves with us, because the *Romanists will not*. A man would think that *no Protestant* should *separate* from us, because the *Romanists all do*. A man would think our *common Enemies* should make us *Friends*. But when the Primitive Christians were to be *baited*, and *torn in pieces*, 'twas but *suitable* for them to be put in *Bears Skins* too. And 'tis *as suitable* for

our Church to be very *well cloath'd* with the *worſt* of *Calumnies*, by ſuch as *aim* at her *Ruin*, and are *reſolv'd* on her *Condemnation*. The many *Diviſions* and *Subdiviſions* of our Sectaries in *England* cannot be eaſily *reckon'd up*, they are ſo *numerous*; (for there are *hardly* more Diviſions amongſt the *Romaniſts* themſelves.) Every Sect is deſirous to have the new-modelling or *new-moulding* of our Church: and there is *not one* of them but has *as much pretenſe* for it, as *any other*; if not an equal *right*, yet an equal *want of right* to be *our Reformers*. They being equally *void of*, and as equally *Diſſenters from* all Authority; abounding *All* equally in a *preference* of their *own* to *Superiour* Judgments; equal *Admirers* of *Themſelves*, and as equally *contemptuous* of *other men*. There is not an *Anabaptiſt*, or *Quaker*, not an *Adamite*, or a *Behemiſt*, no nor any other Sectary of whatſoever Denomination, but thinks it hard, and takes it ill, we are not All of Their Opinion, and do not conform to Their way of Worſhip. Now what a *Monſter* would our Church be, if *every one* of theſe *Sects* had the *ſhaping* of her? and how much *worſe* would our *Babel* be, than *That* which they call *The Whore of Babylon*? What then is to be *done*, or to be *ſaid* in this caſe

caſe of our *preſent Breaches?* They that are *over* us in *Authority* muſt tell us what is to be *done*; But what is fitteſt to be *ſaid* I ſuppoſe is This: That ſuch of our Engliſhmen as own themſelves *Proteſtants*, and yet *divide* from the *Church of England*, do contribute a great deal *more* towards the bringing in of *Popery*, than all the *Emiſſaries* of *Rome* could have done *without* them. And if ever we live to ſee the *Abomination of Deſolation*, *ſtanding* as heretofore *in our holy Places*, it will enter in at *That*, and at no other Door, than what our *Schiſms* and *Separations* have open'd to it. Nothing but our *Diviſions* can *bring in* Popery; and I had almoſt ſaid too, that Nothing but our *Union* can *keep* it *out*. But *united* we cannot be, (whilſt they that have *divided* from us are ſo ſtrangely *ſubdivided* among themſelves,) unleſs it be by *All Parties*, from every part of the *Circumference*, *concentring* themſelves in *the Church of England*. And this the *proudeſt* of them may do, not onely *without a Bluſh*, but with the *greateſt honour* and reputation to be imagin'd. For what (I pray) is the Church of *England*, but a moſt *Renowned* and *National* Church? A National Church the moſt *peaceably* and the moſt *regularly* reformed of All the Churches.

The chief *Reformed* Church of *Chriſtendom*, which has *publickly* been *Eſtabliſh'd* by *Law*, and *Canon*. The *onely Proteſtant* Church in *Europe*, which has been *able* as well as *willing* to *protect* other Churches in their Diſtreſſes. In a word, *The Church of England* has ever *conquer'd*, and *confuted*, and (if her *fugitive Children* do not unnaturally betray her,) will ever *keep* us all *ſafe* from *the Church of Rome*.

§ 14. Take we heed in the *Third* place of ſuch Deceivers, as would have it thought *a mark* of the *moſt reform'd*, to preach up an *Exemption from human Laws*, (ſuch eſpecially as relate to the externals of Religion,) and ſo *a Licentiouſneſs of Life*, for *Chriſtian Liberty*; ever *preſſing* their Hearers *to ſtand faſt in it*, that is, to be *obſtinate* and *ſturdy Rebells*. As if the *Liberty* of a *Chriſtian*, wherein the *Galatians* were bid to *ſtand faſt*, were not at all a *Manumiſſion* from the *Bondage* of *Sin*, and from the *Empire* of *Satan*, and from the *Rigor* of the *Law* as 'twas given by *Moſes*. But a *freedom from Chriſt*, and *Chriſtianity it ſelf*. Not onely from the *poſitive*, but from the *Moral* Law of *Moſes*, which is as well the Law of *Nature*, and the Law of *Chriſt* too; and which, he tells us moſt expreſly, He *came not to abrogate*, but on

Gal. 5. 1.

the

the contrary to *fulfill*; and also πληρῶσαι, to *fill it up*. As if the *Liberty* of a *Christian* extended it self even to *Libertinism it self*; rendring every man *free* to judge the *Laws*, and *Legislators*, and (with a greater force of reason) the learned *Judges* of the Land: *free* to regulate the *Laws* by their *several Humours*, (which by the way is a thing *impossible*, and flatly implies a *Contradiction*,) rather than to regulate their *several Humours* by the *Laws*; which is not onely *possible*, but so absolutely *necessary*, that He who will not do this, (conform his private humour to publick Laws,) is fit to live in a *Desert*, in the Company of Creatures which have *no Law* at all; not in a *Kingdom*, or *Commonwealth*, not in a *City*, or a *Church*, where *Human Laws* (under God's) are the *Life* of *Liberty*, and *Propriety*, nor onely of *Livelihood*, but *Life it self*. Whosoever has been *protected* from any *injuries* of men by the *Laws* in force, must needs *confirm*, by his *Experience*, the *Truth* of what I now say: That such a Subject as will no longer *allow* the Laws, than the *Laws* allow *him* in his being *Lawless*, or no longer than they are *pleasing* and *usefull* to him, (as when they avenge him upon his Enemies, defend him in his Liberty, and assert him in his Estate,)

deſerves not thoſe Benefits of *Propriety* and *Safety* the Laws afford him. The Laws (I ſay) not onely *under* which, but *by* which he lives. 'Tis very plain, that ſuch Laws *deſerve* but *ill* from all *others*, if they do not deſerve from *Him* an *uniformity* in his Obedience. Where human Laws *command* That which God does no where *forbid*, and *vice versâ*, where they *forbid* what God does no where *command*, Nothing is plainer in all the Scriptures, than that The *Ordinances* of *Men* are alſo the *Ordinances* of *God*: and to *ſubmit* our ſelves to *Them*, not of *neceſſity*, but of *choiſe*, not ſo much *for fear of wrath*, as *for Conſcience ſake*, is no ſmall part of our *Chriſtian Liberty*, wherewith *Chriſt has made us free*. Gal. 5. 1.

Rom. 13. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

§ 15. Take we heed in the *fourth* place of ſuch Deceivers, as would beguile us into a *faith*, apt to make us *unfaithfull* in all our ways; a faith that *all* things *coming to paſs* were antecedently *unavoidable*; and that by conſequence when we have *ſinn'd*, we have onely done *That*, which we could never have *prevented* the doing of: and this by the force of a moſt *abſolute irreſpective irreverſible Decree*, which did eternally ſo *determin* both the *End*,

End, and the *Means*, as to neceſſitate our *Impieties* as well as *Puniſhments*. So that if we are *Elected*, all our *Vices* cannot *hurt* us; and if we are *not*, all our *Vertues* cannot *avail* us. So again, if we are *Reprobates*, we *cannot* repent although we *would*; and if we are *not*, we muſt repent, do what we *can*; and by conſequence, as we were *born*, ſo we may *live* without care. Take we heed of being couzen'd by ſuch falſe Logick, as may help us either *merrily* or *deſpairingly* to Hell, by making us *careleſs* of our *Actions*, and *neglectfull* of our *End*. By way of *Antidote* to the *Venom* lying hid in this Doctrin, we muſt ſo *think* of God, as becomes his *Godhead*. We muſt *think* nothing of *God*, which is diſhonourable in *Men*. We muſt *believe* nothing of *Him*, which we would not be very willing to have believed of *our ſelves*. And we muſt ſo *ſpeak* of God in the Ears of Men, as to beget in them a *love* and a *reverence* of him. And this we ſhall be ſure to do, if we ſpeak of his *Promiſes* and his *Threats* as we find them in Scripture to be *General*, and by conſequence *Conditional*; of his *Soveraignty*, as *Juſt*; and of his *Mercy*, as extenſive to *all his Works*; of his *Will*, as *Wiſedom*; *ſincere*, and *uniform*, not repug-

repugnant to it self, whether as *signi*, or *beneplaciti*, *reveal'd*, or *secret*; of his *Decrees* from all *Æternity*, in proportion to the *Rule* by which they are executed *in Time*; exclusive of his being *a Respecter of Persons*, and inclusive of his dealing with All *according to their Deeds*; of *Faith*, as *dead*, *without Works*; of *Repentance*, as *false*, without *Amendment*; of *Justification*, as *in Time*, not (as say the *Antinomians*) from all *Æternity*. For hence 'tis logically inferr'd by some of Eminence in the world, (who would not be thought to be *Antinomians*,) that their *Sins* were *forgiven* before *committed*; and that *Repentance* does not *præcede*, but *follow* Pardon. A Doctrin as dangerous as any other that can be nam'd; and which does not *adorn*, but *disgrace* the Gospel, (as far as *Some* at least are thought to be *Preachers* of it,) which S. *Peter* on the contrary thought good to preach in *This* Order; *Repent*, *and be Converted*, *that your Sins may be blotted out*. Clearly intimating unto us, that *a blotting out of Sins* can never *follow*, unless *Repentance* and *Conversion* do go *before*. They that teach otherwise, are apt to beget a *Disbelief*, or (which is worse) an *ill Opinion* of the Almighty. Take we heed therefore that we be not deceived by such as These.

§16. Again

§ 16. Again take we heed of those *Idol-Shepherds*, (to use the phrase of the Prophet *Zechary*,) whose *left* Eye at least is sharp enough *sighted*, but onely their *right Eye is full of darkness*. They have human Learning enough, enough and too much of worldly Wisedom, but have no Divine light whereby to guide it. Such are they of whom I spake in the *later* part of my *Last* Discourse; who call their *Confidence* or *Caprice* by the name of *Conscience*, and teach the people under their charge, as 'twere to *regulate* their Lives by that *crooked Rule*. I do the rather speak twice of this grand Fallacy, because I take it to be *That*, of which we can never be told *enough*. For till men are catechiz'd in the point of *Conscience*, made to know its true *nature*, and the signification of its *Name*, (if I may speak mine *own* judgment with due submission to my *Superiours*,) they will not onely go *securely*, but even *greedily* to Destruction. Be their Sins never so *many*, and in weight never so *great*, yet if they can get themselves to *think* that they are *conscionably committed*, (as *Clement* did, and *Ravilliac*, and many more nearer Home,) they will reckon upon a *Saintship*, from nothing else but the *absence* of *lesser Sins* than they delight in, and doat upon. They will imagin *they have* Zech. 11. 17.

made their Election ſure, or rather that they have made *themſelves* ſure of their Election, (as they love to miſtake the Text,) even by ſuch a kind of *partial* and *painted innocence*, as (being ſeriouſly conſider'd) is common to them with the *Devil*; who is not a *Swearer*, or a *Drunkard*, or a *Committer of Adultery*, and yet he is not the leſs *a Devil*. But ſuch Profeſſors not conſidering, that *Spiritual Pride* with her two Daughters, *Sacrilege*, and *Rebellion*, are Sins more antient than *Hell itſelf*, make no doubt but Thoſe things will not onely *accompany*, but (as the Angels did *Lazarus*) will carry them up into *Abraham*'s *Boſom*. If we conſider by what *Impieties* ſome *Bigots* have expected to *merit* Bliſs, and what others have underſtood by their *following Providence*, and *Conſcience*, and by their being *over-acted to do the Work of the Lord*, (for ſo they cant it,) we cannot but ſay the greateſt *Mercy* which can be ſhewn to ſuch *Criminals*, is to make them *leſs nocent* (if not *innocent*) *unavoidably*. Which being not to be effected by *congruous Grace*, becauſe it is *not irreſiſtible*, ſhould by conſequence be effected by that which *is*; that if they will not chooſe the *Glory*, they may be mercifully compell'd to injoy the *benefit* of their Obedience; and that how-

however they may periſh by *other* Crimes, they may yet be *diſenabl'd* to *damn* themſelves by their *Rebellions*.

§ 17. Laſtly, take we the greateſt heed, of being led into The *Errour* that *'tis impoſſible for us to Erre*, whilſt we believe as we are bid by the Church of *Rome*, which *deceives the moſt incurably*, by getting her Children to believe, ſhe is divinely *undeceivable*. Take away This, and all her *other* Impoſitions will fall to ruin of Themſelves. But by the *Help* of This Errour, *All* the *reſt* muſt needs be ſwallow'd, how groſs ſoever. To wit, That the 2 *Books of Maccabees* (and All the reſt of the *Apocrypha*) are as much the Word of God, as the 5 *Books of Moſes*, or *any other*: at leaſt ſince the Canons of the *Council* at *Trent*, to whoſe *Authority* (forſooth) The Holy *Scriptures* owe *Theirs*. That in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it is the Intereſt and the Duty of every *Chriſtian* to be a *Canibal*; even *materially* and *groſly* to eat and drink the Fleſh and Bloud of *The Man Chriſt Jeſus*. That the *ſingle Biſhop of Rome* is the *Univerſal Paſtor*, *Head*, and *Monarch*, over the whole *Catholick Church*, both *Diffuſive*, and *Repreſentative*, though in an abſolute *Contradiction* to Four famous *Councils*, (which with the Papalins

themselves do pass for *General*,) to wit, of *Pisa*, *Constance*, *Basil*, and *Siena*. Not to insist on those other Councils, of *Chalcedon*, *Constantinople*, *Antioch*, and *Africa*. That there must be *an Infallible Judge of Controversies* on Earth, over and above the Word of God; Though they who say it are not agreed, who the Judge of them should be: [a] whether the *Diffusive*, or *Representative*, or (That which They call) the *Virtual* Church Catholick, or Their ***Principium Unitatis***, (as they call the *Bishop of Rome*,) who proudly *Lords it over them All*. That though nothing is to be added to The Apostles own Creed, consisting of but 12 Articles, (Each Apostle casting in One, as *Ruffinus* tells us,) yet the 12 more at least, thereto added by *Pius Quartus* and the *Council* of *Trent*, are to be sworn to, and Believed, as of equal Necessity to Life Æternal. To sum up all in a word, No Contradiction can be so gross, no Absurdity so great, as not to be readily entertained by Those Jesuited Bigots, who have beforehand devoured and swallow'd down without chewing That *Breeding* Blasphemy and Falshood, [b] *That the Pope is as Infallible as Jesus Christ, as often as he speaks ex Cathedrâ, even without a General Council, not in Questions onely of Right, but in those*

[a] See the two short Discourses of Mr. *Dodwell*, especially the *First*, and the excellent *Præface* to it.

[b] *Thesis propugnanda in Aulâ Collegii Claromontani, die* 12. *Decembris A. D.* 1661. See the plea of Monsieur *Talon* Advocat General against This *Thesis*, in the New Hæresie of *Jesuitism*, p. 242, 243. and of the same Book, p. 3. & 4.

those of Facti also. Let no man therefore *deceive* us with his pretended *Infallibility*, more than with his being *God*, or wholly *Impeccable* upon Earth. For He who cannot be *deceiv'd*, can as little *Sin*; they are Attributes peculiar to *God alone*.

§ 18. But now 'tis time that I proceed to the second general Member of Sub-Division, by which a Caveat was enter'd against Deceipts of all sorts, as well of the *best*, as the *worst* of Men. For

As heed is to be taken that no *evil* man deceive us by *good Appearances* and *Prætenses*; so there is use of as great heed, that no *good* man deceive us (against his will) by the *evil Example* of his *Miscarriage*. There being at least as much danger of the *one*, as of the *other*. If we allow our selves to * think we may safely *do*, what some very *good People* have *done* before us, the consequence of it will be This, that we shall imitate the *worst* in the *best* of Men, and leave the best to be *Their peculiar*. And therefore here 'tis very fit for our observation, that 'twas not said by our Saviour (*Matth.* 10. 17.) προσέχετε ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων, beware of *Men*, that is of *Some* men, (Those of the *Consistories* or *Sanedrim* amongst the *Jews*, who yet are aimed at in

* *Ab exemplo & simili tot sunt experimenta fallaciarum, quot hominum capita: dum quilibet assequi vult quemlibet, dum exemplo dicit se vivere talium, quos approbat Ecclesia & canonizat, &c.* Gerson *Tract. 8. de custodiâ Angelorum partitio 3. super Magnificat.*

in especial manner,) But with an article prefixt, προσέχετε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, beware of *Men*, that is, of all men *in general*, not excepting the very *best*. For let *Erasmus* and *Vatablus* say what they will, the præfixing of the *article* seems to import the whole *species*; as *Tostatus* and *Casaubon* at least do judge. Let us not say therefore with [a] *Bellarmin*, that so good a Woman as *Sarah* had never prompted her Husband to lie with *Hagar*, if she had not well known it to have been *lawfull*. No nor yet with a [b] greater man, that *Abram* might *dissemble* and *tell a lie to save his life*. Nor think the better of *Adultery* or *wilfull Murther*, for being committed even by *David* after a state of Regeneration. Nor look upon Incest itself as venial, because 'twas acted even by *Lot*, who in the holy Scripture is stiled *Righteous*. Nor imagin it does the rather consist with *Wisedom* to be *Idolatrous*, for that *Solomon Himself* did *worship Idols*, who is renowned for his *Wisedom* throughout the World. Nor be so illogical as to conclude in the behalf of *Polygamy*, because so honest a man as *Jacob* had *two Wives at once*, and is *no where reproved* in all the *Scripture*. Nor may we give an ear to Them who do *excuse* the worst *Impieties* of all such men as have been *Regenerate*, by imputing

a *Non credibile est Saram fœminam sanctissimam id facturum fuisse, nisi licitum esse scivisset.* Bellarm. *lib. de Matrimonio cap. 2.*
b Augustin. *in Gen. Quæst. 26. & contra Faustum Manich. l. 22. c. 23.*

puting them wholly to the *infirmity* of the *fleſh*, and not as well to the *filthineſs* of the *Spirit*. Some there are who are *ſerious* in the uſe of *ſuch Logick*, (be it ſpoken to the diſgrace of their wit and learning,) though it is patcht up of nothing but one groſs Fallacy, *à benè diviſis ad malè conjuncta*. Many things are very *falſe* in a *compound* ſenſe, which being *divided* are very *true*; and many are *true* being *compounded*, which *in ſenſu diviſo* are very *falſe*. *David* was *holy*, and committed wilfull Murther in conjunction with Adultery; But it was not committed by *holy David*. (for This would imply a Contradiction *in adjecto*.) He was holy *before*, and holy *after*, but in a ſtate of *Unholineſs* and *Condemnation* whilſt he lay *ſnoring* in his *impieties* (as he did for ſome months) *without repentance*. So *Solomon* was *wiſe*, and a *Worſhipper* of *Idols*; But he was not *Then* wiſe, *when* he ſtood guilty of Idol-Worſhip. *Solomon* and *Solomon* were juſt as different, as *Peter* in the *Hall*, and *behind the Door*; or as the *Book* of *Kings*, and the *Book* of *Eccleſiaſtes*. When That impiety was committed, it was by *Solomon the Fool*, who recover'd not his *Wiſedom* till he *repented*; that is to ſay, till he *amended*, and *chang'd his life*, till he became *a new Creature*,

ture, and *brought forth fruits meet for Repentance.*

§ 19. And if heed is to be taken that *no good man deceive us*, we may not sure neglect *Him* who has *nothing* of *good* but in *bare appearance.* If the *former* may deceive us by the *example* of his *Sin*, well may the *later* deceive us too by the *lying sanctity* of his *life.* Then let not *any man* deceive us by *any means.* Neither by giving *smooth Speeches*, nor by wearing *rough Garments*; Neither by using *Foxes words*, nor by having *Sheeps Cloathing*; Neither by *Spirit*, nor by *Letter.* Not by the *current* of his *Prosperity*, not by the *readiness* of his *Praying*, not by the *commonness* of his *Preaching*, not by the plausible *Demureness* (called the *Godliness*) of his *Practice.* For the Devil were but a Dunce, in case he could not *fish* (whilst he is *angling* after Souls) with *more Baits* than *These*; and too contemptible a *Mimick*, if amongst *all* his cunning *Actings* he could not *personate a Saint.*

2 Thess. 2. 3.

Zech. 13. 4. Eph. 5. 6. Matth. 7. 15.

2 Thess. 2. 2.

§ 20. But this is not All which does properly belong to a Christian's Caution. We must not onely take heed *that no man deceive us*, but as great heed is to be taken that *we our selves deceive no man*, and (more than That) that

we

we undeceive others who are deceiv'd. We must *contend* for the Faith, and we must do it also with *earnestness*, (as S. *Jude* exhorts us all in the 4th. verse of his Epistle,) not onely be in the right *our selves*, but labour to bring into the way of Truth all such as have erred and are deceiv'd. We must labour by our *Arguments*, as well as *Prayers*, to strengthen them that already stand, to comfort and help the weak-hearted, to *lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble Knees*, to raise up such as we know are fallen, and by any means possible to Tread down Satan under all our feet.

§ 21. We see there is Danger on every side, both *within* us, and *without* us, both in *solitude*, and in *company*, whether our Company does consist either of *evil*, or *good* men, we had need have our Eyes and our Wits about us. We have need of it at *all* times, but *above all* in such as *These*, to which our Lord does here allude in the Text and Context which lies before us. And This would lead me, if I would follow, to the Third particular in the Division; to wit, *the Time*, or *Occasion*, wherein the use of this Care will be most in season. But This I confess is such a difficult and such a slippery kind of Doctrin, as of which I had rather make a very

private use, than run the publick risque of an *Application*. For in such an Auditory as This, (consisting of All that is Great and Prudent,) for Me to adventure to make a Search into Those particulars, out of which our publick dangers are most arising, were to discourse concerning *Tactick*s to such as *Hannibal* and *Scipio*; or to *Demetrius the Poliorketick* concerning the *Taking of a Town*. And therefore leaving to *men of Counsel* their proper Business, which is to sit at the Helm of Church and State, and wisely to provide for the Good of Both; I keep my self within the Modesty which is expected from a *Divine*. Abruptly concluding my present Sermon, just as S. *Peter* his first Epistle, with a

1 Pet. 5. 8, 9, 10, 11. νήψατε, γρηγορήσατε, *Be sober, be vigilant; because your Adversary the Devil as a roaring Lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the Faith. And the God of all Grace who hath called us to his æternal glory by Christ Jesus, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

OF

OF

FEAR

As Neceſſary to

FAITH,

IN THE

Well-ordering of our LIVES.

1 COR. 10. 12.

Wherefore let him who thinketh that he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall.

§ 1. A Caveat evermore in *ſeaſon*, and of *neceſſity* to be *preſs'd*, and that upon every ſort of Perſons of all Conditions and Degrees, and this in what *ſenſe* ſoever we pleaſe to take it.

It has its value even in *That* wherein the Apoſtle never meant it, and which (to ſay Truth) was much below his Conſideration, to

wit, as apply'd to any ſecular or *worldly Station*. For had we the leiſure to make reflection upon all Times and Places, as far as Hiſtorians have brought them to us, we ſhould find the obſervation to be as general, as it is wholſom, That the greateſt Things and Perſons, (the greateſt Monarchies with their Monarchs, the greateſt States-men as well as States,) have *Then* been *neareſt* to a *Downfall*, when they have been in all appearance the *moſt eſtabliſh'd*. How many are there in the world in whom *Extremities* have *concenter'd?* And as the two Globes of Heaven and Earth do mutually touch in a ſingle Point, ſo there is nothing more frequent, than for Conditions of as great Diſtance as the Nadir and the Zenith to meet in one and the ſame Man. *Nebuchadnezzar* the moſt exalted, and the moſt abject in all *Aſſyria*. *Apries* the beſt provided, and the moſt deſtitute thing in *Ægypt*. *Polycrates* the fortunateſt and the unfortunateſt man of *Samos*: *Deified* one day, and *crucified* the next. *Polydorus* the moſt belov'd, and the moſt hated of *Lacedæmonians*. *Periander* the very wiſeſt, and moſt beſotted of the *Corinthians*. *Sejanus* the moſt admir'd, and moſt contemptible man in *Rome*. *Dionyſius* the fierceſt Tyrant, and tameſt Pædogogue in

in *Greece*. Therefore the *Apophthegm* of *Solon* was not ſo *witty*, as it was *true*, That *no man's happineſs can be certain before his Death*. And 'twas for this reaſon onely, that *Cleobis* and *Biton* were præferr'd before *Cræſus* in point of Bliſs, that *They* were *dead, and died well*; whereas *He*, with his Proſperities, was *yet but living*; And neither knew *how* he ſhould *End*, nor what *Evenements* might *befall* him 'twixt *This* and *That*. My Text had therefore been very pertinent and of moment, had it exhorted to nothing better, than *human* Prudence; or provided for nothing more than an *outward* Safety. Diog. Laert. *l.* 1.

§ 2. But as nothing can profit a man to purpoſe, which cannot *profit him at all in the day of Wrath*, ſo no Prudence can be ſufficient, but That by which a man *ſtands in the Evil day*. Not in the day of *Temptation* onely, But in the *hour* of *Death*, and the *Day* of *Judgment*. Nor can we pronounce of our *Condition*, as it is *ſpiritual* and *æternal*, but by *beginning* our Accompt from our *later End*. Which becauſe without Prophecy *we* cannot do, (as *Jeremy* did by *Zedekiah*,) therefore *happy is the man that feareth always*, as *Salomon* by his experience was taught himſelf to teach others. *Proſperity* Prov. 11. 4. Eph. 6. 13. Prov. 28. 14.

is one thing, and *Happineſs* quite another. We may be ſure, whilſt we *live*, that we are more or leſs *proſperous*; But whether more or leſs *happy*, we muſt *live and die too* to aſſure our ſelves. *Death* alone is That *Point*, in which the Terreſtrial and Cœleſtial Globes *meet*, if they meet at all. And *as the Tree falleth*, juſt *ſo it lyeth*. S. *Paul* himſelf, whilſt yet a *Paſſenger*, and not *within ſight* of his *Journy's End*, (whilſt he was yet but in the *Valley*, far enough from having aſcended unto the Top of Mount *Nebo*, from whence he might have ſeen his Crown of righteouſneſs,) was ſo afraid to looſe his *Station*, and to *fall from his own ſtedfaſtneſs*, (which S. *Peter* provides againſt too) that he did *beat down his Body*, and carefully *bring it into ſubjection*, and all for this momentous, though modeſt reaſon, *leſt whilſt he preached unto others, He himſelf might become a Caſtaway*. And being as carefull of *other* Mens, as of his *own* æternal Intereſt, he did as tenderly admoniſh them as he had done his own Soul. Giving this Caveat to *all* in general, though written in ſpecial to his *Corinthians*, *Let him who thinketh that he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall.*

2 Pet. 3. 17.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

§ 3. In which words we have Three things obſer-

observable. First, a *tacit Dissuasive* from *carnal Confidence* and *Security*. Next an *explicit Exhortation* to *Christian Prudence*. Lastly, the *Reason* of Both at once from a great *Danger* on the one side, and in consequence of That, from as great a *Necessity* on the other. The *Danger* is not so *trivial*, as That of falling with holy *Job*, from an high Pitch of *Wealth* to the Depth of *Poverty*; or with the brave *Aristomenes*, from a Pinnacle of *Glory* into the *Gulph* of *Lacedæmon*; Nor is the *Danger* no more affrighting, than That of falling with *Jeremy* into *Jonathan*'s *Dungeon*, or with *Daniel* into the *Den* of the hungry *Lions*. But here the *Danger* is of falling from *Light* to *Darkness*; from an *high* pitch of *Grace*, the *Favour of God*, into a *Bottomless Asphaltites of Fire unquenchable*. Some there were who did not think there could be any such *Danger*, to them that *stood* as *They* did (or as they *thought* they did at least) in *a state of Grace*. Such were the *Gnosticks* alluded to in several verses before my Text. But 'tis below S. *Paul*'s Reason, and inconsistent with his Sincerity, to write of *Danger* where there is *None*; or to forewarn us of a Mischief which cannot possibly come to pass. In bidding us look unto our *footing*, he takes

takes it for granted that we are liable to a *Fall*. And accordingly 'tis the sense of our common Mother the Church of *England*, (in the 16th. of her 39 Articles,) *That after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin, though by the Grace of God too we may rise again.* Now the greater our *Danger* is by *carnal* confidence and *security*, the greater *need* we stand in of a *Christian Prudence*. And This, though but *One*, is such a *Cardinal* vertue, that 'tis really a *Guardian to all the rest*. Especially as consisting of those three parts, *Providence*, *Caution*, and *Circumspection*, without which it is impossible (as nicely distinguish'd by the * School-men) for Christian *Prudence* to be complete. For first of all we must have *Providence*, to cast about for such *means* as are conducing unto our *End*. Next we must have *Circumspection*, whereby to attend to every *Circumstance* wherewith the *Means* are to be *cloath'd*. Last of all we must have *Caution*, for the *avoiding* of those *Impediments*, which may otherwise *hinder* our Course of vertue, and unhappily interrupt us in bringing the *Means* unto the *End*.

* Aquin. 22. q. 48. c. & 22. q. 49. art. 6, 7, 8.

§ 4. Now to These three parts of a Christian *Prudence*, there are three sorts of men who are here

here exhorted; either directly in the Text, or in its relation to the Context.

First, consider we the Text in its meer *literal* importance, ὁ δοκῶν ἑστάναι, *Let him who seems to himself to stand*, and that as fixt as an *Antinomian*, even by *Grace irresistible*; by having been *justified* from *Æternity*; by having had all his Sins *forgiven*, so long *before* they were *committed*; or by being *not able* to Sin at all; so as in His imagination he cannot *possibly depart from the Living God*; (which yet the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* does bid him *take heed of*;) who *seems to himself to stand so* firmly, as that he cannot fall a *little*, much less *totally*; much less *finally* from Grace; Let *Him*, (I say) as well as others, *take heed lest he fall.* Heb.3.12.

Next, consider we the Text as it looks back upon the Context, (from the first Verse unto the eleventh,) and thereby acquaints us with its more rational importance. *Let him*, (who does not only seem to himself to stand, but) *who stands in good earnest* by ghostly strength; by having had his *feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel*; by having been cleansed from his Sins in the Bloud of *Christ*, and in the Baptism of Tears, which arise from the Spring of sincere Repentance; Let *him* not think it a thing be- Eph.6.15.

low him, to *take* great *heed*, that *he do not fall.* For the *Iſraelites* from the firſt to the tenth verſe of this Chapter, were all in Covenant with God; did all partake of thoſe priviledges which he vouchſafed them as his Children; were all *baptized unto Moſes in the Cloud, and in the Sea*; did all injoy the ſame Miracles; were fed with *Manna* ſent down from Heaven; refreſh'd with Water out of *Horeb*, guſhing forth from a dry and a barren *Rock*; They myſtically taſted of *Chriſt Himſelf*, (v. 4.) But yet as *firmly* as they *ſtood*, we find their *feet ſlipt.* For firſt they *ſtagger'd* in the *Faith*; Then they *ſtumbl'd* into *Idolatry*; Next they *fell* in the *Wilderneſs*, (all excepting two perſons,) and *were deſtroy'd of the Deſtroyer*, (v. 5. and 10.) *All which things* (ſaith our Apoſtle) *happen'd to them for Enſamples, and are written for our inſtruction on whom the ends of the world are come*, (v. 11.) From whence He rationally draws This ſignal *Corollary* and *Caveat*, (for we ſee 'tis Both at once, and is accordingly brought in with the Cauſal *Wherefore*,) *Let him who thinketh that he ſtands take heed leſt he fall.*

Yet one ſtep farther. Let him who *ſtands faſter* than other men who do *truly ſtand*, almoſt as faſt in *reality*, as the *Gnoſticks* in the Con-

text

text did in their proud *Imagination*; as faſt as *David* and S. *Peter* in their high pitch of *Grace*; as faſt as *Adam* in That of *Innocence*; or as the bright *Morning Stars* in That of *Glory*; Let *him* (I ſay) as well as others, yea let him *above* others take heed leſt he fall. The reaſon is, becauſe *His* Fall, if he falls, muſt needs be the *greater* and leſs excuſable, the *higher* and *firmer* his *Station* is, and the *greater* his *Ability* to ſtand his *Ground*. The Angels that fell *from as high as Heaven*, and that *without a Tempter* too, even for this very reaſon (as I obſerved once before) could not fall leſs than *as low as Hell*; and ſo *Their* Fall was *without Recovery*. For when *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, he did not take upon him the Nature of Angels*, whereby to give the faln Regiment a Capability of riſing, (however *Origen* and his Diſciples would have given it had they been able,) and that for the reaſon I juſt now hinted. Whereas the lapſed Man *Adam*, newly taken out of the *Earth*, and whoſe Foundation was in the *Duſt*, had both the *Subtilty* of a *Tempter*, and the *Strength* of a *Temptation*, and (together with his Innocence) a *Frailty* of *Nature*; all which did excuſe him at leaſt *à Tanto*; whereby he became the properer

object of God's *Compassion* as well as Justice, and so the more fit for a *Restauration*. From whence I humbly conceive I may infer with good Logick, that by how much the *firmer* our *footing* is, by so much the *greater*, and not the lesser, our heed ought to be *that we do not fall*.

I have hitherto shew'd the *Meaning* and the *Cohærence* of the Text, and how 'tis necessary for all, of all Conditions and Degrees, by whichsoever of its handles men please to hold it. And I have laid out the several matters to be meditated upon in its Prosecution.

§ 5. But being seriously desirous to speak as *usefully* as I can, and that within the Time allow'd, I am to take and give notice of three sorts of *Libertines* in these our days, who either have *wilfully transcrib'd*, or else have *stumbl'd accidentally* upon some of the worst of Hæresies in the Primitive Times; and are as dangerous to *others*, as destructive to *Themselves*. Some are of opinion, that if Vessels of Election, *they* **cannot Sin do what they can*. They are placed in such a state of *Impeccability*, that on a supposal of their *willingness*, they are *not able* to do amiss. And This expressly was the Hæresie of The infamous *Manichæus*, as S. *Jerome* tells *Ctesiphon*; adding also that *Priscilian* was a Bird

* Manichæus *electos suos, quos inter animas Platonis in cœlestibus collocat, dicit omni carere peccato, nec si velint, peccare posse.* Hieron. *ad* Ctesiph. *adversus* Pelag. Tom. 2. *p.* 252.

Bird of that Feather. Others are of opinion, that though they *can* commit *Sin*, God *cannot ſee it* in his *Elect*. And This expreſly was the Hæreſie of *Marcus*, who taught the poor and rich Women whom he *debauch'd* and made *His*, that they might fearleſly and freely be as voluptuous as they pleas'd, **becauſe by vertue of their Redemption they were* ἀκρατήτοι καὶ ἀόρατοι, *at once inapprehenſible and inviſible to the Judge.* Juſt as *Homer* feign'd *Pallas* to have cover'd her ſelf with *Pluto*'s Helmet, that ſo ſhe might not be ſeen by *Mars*. (A Privilege as ſenſleſs, as That which was allow'd to *the Ring* of *Gyges*.) There is a *Third* ſort of *Thinkers*, who ſay that God can *ſee* Sin, but cannot *puniſh* it in his Elect, or *impute* it to them; and that they are ſo *ſure-footed*, that though they *ſlip* never ſo *groſly*, or *ſtumble* never ſo *often*, yet for all That *they can never fall*, not only not *finally*, but but not ſo much as *for a Time*. And This expreſly was the Hæreſie of *Jovinian*, (which S. *Jerome* in a whole Book has very effectually confuted,) that They who once have been *regenerate* in the Laver of Baptiſm, cannot be tempted by the Devil, ſo as to ceaſe being regenerate. We have the *Sum* of *all Three* (and the *Sequel* too) in the one *Valentinian Hæreſie*, which

* Διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν ἀκρατήτους καὶ ἀοράτους γίνεσθαι τῷ κριτῇ. Epiphan. *Hæreſ* 34. *ex* Iren. *l.*1.*c.*8. *&* 9. *p.* 72. Hom. Iliad. 5.

Hieronymus *adverſus* Jovinianum *l.*2. Tom.2. *p.* 69. *&c.*

was one of the *first*, and the *worst* of all; as the holy Father and Martyr *Irenæus* shews it at large. What the *Malignity* of it is, and to how deep a degree of Wickedness 'tis apt at least in its nature to betray them that own it, They *Themselves* have best told us by *This Similitude*, * That *as a Mass of pure Gold in the foulest Dirt does not lose so much as its beauty, much less its nature, but still retains the whole goodness and worth of Gold; so let the Saints, that is Themselves, lie and wallow whilst they will in the Mire of Sins, and in those Sins* especially *whereof the Scripture saith plainly, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, yet they cannot thereby lose their spirituality and perfection.* They cannot cease from being *Branches* of That *true Vine*, into which they were once *ingrafted.*

* Ὃν γὰρ τρόπον τὸν χρυσὸν ἐν βορβόρῳ καταπεσὼν οὐκ ἀπολλύει τὸ καλὸν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἰδίαν σύνην διαφυλάττει, τοῦ βορβόρου μηδὲν ἀδικῆσαι δυναμένου τὸν χρυσὸν· ὅτω, &c. Iren. *l.* 1. *p.* 26.

Gal. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

§ 6. Now that other mens *Dangers* may be employ'd to keep us *safe*, and that other mens real *Miseries* may be improv'd to our being *Happy*, we must convince our selves throughly of the Truth of this Doctrin, which in my Text is most clearly and unavoidably imply'd; To wit, that He who now *stands* in a Christian State, of *Repentance*, and *Conversion*, and a *blotting out of Sins*, (which is *Justification*,) may possibly fall

fall into a *dangerous* yea and a *damnable* Condition, unleſs he takes ſuch ſtrict *heed*, as our bleſſed Apoſtle does here injoyn. And here I cannot but be ſorry, that ſo *clear* a *Text* as *This* ſhould ſtand in need of any *Sermon* to give it *Evidence*. That our *Apoſtle*'s *Exhortation* ſhould be ſo little *argumentative* in ſome mens minds, that we muſt light up our *Candles* to ſhew his *Sun*. I much admire that thoſe *Libertines*, who think they ſtand in no need of this holy *Caveat*, are not ſufficiently convinc'd by their own *Experience*, that ſince their having been *regenerate* in the *Sacrament* of *Baptiſm*, which is (no leſs than *Circumciſion*) a **Seal of the righteouſneſs of Faith*, they have faln into *deadly* and *waſting* Sins. Lord! how many *Sons and Daughters* of our one Common *Mother*, the *Church of England*, have *renounced* the very *Baptiſm*, by which alone they were *Chriſtianiz'd*, have abandon'd the *Houſe of Prayer*, and in it the *Lord's Table*, and on it the *outward Sign of inviſible Grace*? have *fallen away* before our faces into the ſcandalous commiſſions of *Schiſm* and *Hæreſie*? have turn'd *apoſtates from the Faith which was once deliver'd unto the Saints*? have indulgently marched on in the ways of *Corah*, in the Sins of *Sacrilege*, and *Rebellion*,

* Rom. 4. 11.

bellion, and ſtill are ſnoring in the Impieties of
Jude 8. being *heady*, *high-minded*, *Deſpiſers of Dominion*,
Rom. 13. 1, 2. and *Evil ſpeakers of Dignities*, ever *Oppoſers* of Authority *ordain'd by God*, which is to be a worſe Thing than *a Common Drunkard?*

§ 7. How many Examples are there in Scripture of *final Apoſtaſie* from *Grace*, or from a *State* of *Regeneration*, enough to dit the wideſt Mouth of the *daring'ſt Gnoſtick?* How many of God's *peculiar people under the Law*, did fall away from their acknowledgment of the onely true God, into the *worſt* of all Sins, which is *Idolatry*, and into the *worſt* of all Idolatries, which is *the worſhipping of Devils*, and into the *worſt* of that *worſt* too, not *by offering* their *Sheep*
Pſal. 106. 37. *and Oxen*, but their own *Sons*, and their own
Iſa. 1. 21, 22, 23. which compare with Hoſ 4. 1, 2, 6. *Daughters* unto Devils? *How did the faithfull City become an Harlot?* how did *her Silver become arrant Droſs? She was* once *full of Judgment*; *Righteouſneſs lodged in her*, *but now Murtherers. Be aſtoniſhed*, *O ye Heavens*, *at this*, *and be horribly afraid*, (as *God himſelf* ſpake by the Prophet *Jeremy*,) *for my People*
Jerem. 2. 12, 13. *have committed two evils*, *forſaken me the fountain of living waters*, *and hewn them out Ciſterns*,
17. *broken Ciſterns which hold no water. Haſt thou not procured this unto thy ſelf*, *in that thou haſt forſaken*

forſaken the Lord thy God? I had planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right ſeed; How then art thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a ſtrange Vine unto me? Nor is it onely under the *Legal*, but under the *Goſpel* Diſpenſation, that many *begin* to build well on a good foundation, but do *not finiſh*. Many **end* in the *fleſh*, who *began* in the *Spirit*; and *Many are* [a] *called*, *but few are choſen*. Many are ſanctified, but few are *ſav'd*. Many are *juſtified* for a *time*, but very few in compariſon do *perſevere* unto the *End*. That ſaying of our Saviour *Matth.*24. 12,13. [*The love of many ſhall wax cold, but he that indureth unto the end ſhall be ſaved,*] S. *Paul* reflecting on, has explained Thus: That *ſome in the later times ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, and doctrines of Devils: ſpeaking lyes in hypocriſie, having their Conſcience ſeared with an hot iron.* There the word in the Original is very obſervable: They ſhall *depart* (ſaith the Engliſh,) ἀποστήσονται (ſaith the Greek,) They ſhall *apoſtatize* from the Faith of *Chriſt*. A very evident *oppoſition* unto *final perſeverance*, in Both thoſe Places; and 'tis as evident that the *Apoſtaſie* there propheſied of, is from a State of *Sanctification*. For the *Love waxing cold*, and the

21.

Luk.14.30.

* Gal.3.3.

[a] Matth.20. 16.

Matth. 24. 12,13.

1 Tim.4.1.

Faith departed from, (*That* expreſſed by our *Saviour*, and *This* by our *Apoſtle*,) are the ſame in both Texts, in which they *ought* to have *perſever'd*. So again in the *firſt* Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle to *Timothy*, S. *Paul* exhorts him to *hold*
1 Tim. 1. 19, 20. *faſt faith*, *and a good Conſcience*, *which ſome* (ſays He) *having put away*, *concerning Faith have made ſhipwrack*. That *This* was *juſtifying Faith* which was thus *put away*, and *ſuffer'd ſhipwrack*, may appear by two reaſons clearly ariſing out of the Text: Firſt, becauſe it was *That*, to the *holding faſt* of which S. *Paul* does there exhort *Timothy*; next, becauſe it was *That*, which was attended with a *good Con-*
Joh. 15. 6. *ſcience*. *If a man* (ſaith our Saviour) *abide not in Me*, *he is caſt forth as a Branch*, *and is withered*, *and caſt into the Fire*: clearly ſpoken of a *Reprobate* who had formerly been *in Chriſt*, but *abideth not in him*, and was therefore *caſt forth* as *a wither'd branch*. A Text to
Rom. 11. 17, & 20. which our Apoſtle in probability does allude, where he tells us of certain *Branches broken off*, from The *Olive Tree*, though once *partakers of the Root and Fatneſs of it*; and *broken off* they were for their *unbelief*. From whence he exhorts his *Believing Romans* to beware, leſt they who now *ſtand by Faith*, do alſo fall into infidelity; and

and *They* be also *broken off*, who are *grafted in*. There are that *hear* the *word of God*, and *receive it with Joy*, and *indure for a while* in that good Course, and yet *in time* of *Persecution they are offended and fall away*, saith our blessed Lord. *Some have erred from the Faith through the Love of money*, saith S. *Paul* to his Son *Timothy*; and in the Eighteenth of S. *Matthew*, the Servant *forgiven*, v. 32. was yet *condemn'd*, v. 35. The same is signified by the Parable of *an unclean Spirit cast out by* Repentance, or regeneration, and re-entring by a Relapse into the *House* of a man's *Heart* well *swept and garnish'd*, and that with 7 Devils, *worse* (if possible) than himself, so as the Person he repossesseth is *worse* than ever. Which very Parable of our *Saviour* S. *Peter* seems to point at in the plainest terms; whilst he tells us of some, so *intangled* and *overcome* by *those pollutions of the world which before they had escap'd*, as that their *later end* was very much *worse then their beginning*. Again 'tis said by the same Apostle, in the Chapter going before, that *He who lacketh those things by which he is to make his Election sure, has forgotten that he was purged from his old Sins*, that is to say, *that he was regenerate*.

Matth. 13. 20, 21.

1 Tim. 6. 10.

Matth. 12. 44.

2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

2 Pet. 1. 9.

§ 8. Whosoever is not satisfied with what I

have hitherto alledg'd out of holy writ, let him tell me what he thinks of That unpardonable Sin, *The Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.* Let him ſay whether that Sin can ever be poſſibly committed, unleſs by one who was once *enlightned*, and had *taſted of the heavenly Gift*, *had been made a partaker of the Holy Ghoſt*, *and of the good word of God*, *and the powers of the World to come.* Let him weigh the *fourth Verſe*, and compare it with the *Sixth* of the *Sixth Chapter* to the *Hebrews*, and Both together with the *Comment* of learned *Calvin* thereupon, if he will not truſt *That* of our moſt learned Dr. *Hammond.* Let him conſider if 'tis not *poſſible* for ſuch a man to *fall away* who is *ſo enlightned*; and if 'tis not *impoſſible* for ſuch a man *falling away* from ſuch a *Station* and *State of Grace*, to be *renew'd again unto repentance.* But above all let him conſider the πάλιν ἀνακαινίζειν in the ſixth verſe of That Chapter, which ſignifies expreſly a *ſecond* regeneration, and every *ſecond* implies a *firſt.* The Apoſtle does not ſay barely, *it is impoſſible to renew them* (if ſuch as they fall away,) but that 'tis impoſſible to renew them *again*; clearly intimating unto us theſe two Illations: Firſt, that a man may ſo fall from a *State* of *Grace*, as not to be able to riſe

Matth. 12. 31,32.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

riſe again; Next, that the *Grace* he falls from was ſuch as gave him a *Salvability*; or ſuch as by which he was in a State of *Regeneration*.

§ 9. Being about to carry my proof from *Univerſals* to *Individuals*, I ſhall not inſtance in *Saul*, with S. *Cyprian* and S. *Auſtin*; much leſs in *Ahab*, with S. *Jerom* and S. *Chryſoſtom*; much leſs yet in *Cain* and *Eſau*; nor yet in *Alexander*, and *Demas*, *Philetus*, and *Hymenæus*, *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes*, who were *Deſerters* of *Chriſt* in his *Apoſtles*, *Waſters of Conſcience*, *and Shipwrackers of Faith*; I ſhall not inſtance in *Dorotheus* who fell away to ſerve Idols at *Theſſalonica*; nor yet in *Nicolaus*, who, though one of the *ſeven Deacons*, was yet the Author of that old *Hæreſie* which carries the Name of The *Nicolaitans*; much leſs ſhall I inſtance in the moſt excellent of the *Hæreſiarchs*, *Neſtorius*, *Photinus*, *Apollinaris*, and *Pelagius*; (for theſe laſt may be the ſubjects of great Diſpute; and whatſoever may be true in the *Judgment* of *Faith*, yet the *Judgment* of *Charity* forbids me to affirm that Theſe did *finally* fall away:) But of *Judas* I ſuppoſe there is no Diſpute. For He was choſen by *Chriſt* as one of the *Twelve ſelect Apoſtles*, *Joh.* 6. 70. and is ſaid to have been *given* by God the Father to God The Son,

2 Tim. 2. 17.
2 Tim. 4. 10.
2 Tim. 1. 15.

whoſe *word he kept* for ſome time, *Joh.* 17. 6. and was juſtified *by Faith*, v. 8. *prayed for by Chriſt*, not as *one of the World*, but as *His peculiar*, v. 9. He *confeſs'd* and *taught Chriſt*, and did *Miracles* in his Name, *Matth.* 10. 5,7,8. He was one of *Chriſt*'s *Sheep*, v. 16. had been grafted into *Chriſt*, *Joh.* 15. 2. notwithſtanding all which, he did not onely *fall from*, but *betray* his Maſter, hang'd himſelf as a man *Loſt*, and is call'd by our Lord expreſly, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, *The Son of Perdition.*

§ 10. I would not here be ſo miſtaken, as if I meant that God's *Elect* can fall away *finally* from Grace. I am ſo very far from That, that I affirm it to be *impoſſible*, and to imply a *Contradiction.* For They and *They onely* are God's *Elect*, who do *finally perſevere* in a Chriſtian Courſe; who being *delivered out of the hands of their Enemies*, do not onely *ſerve God in holineſs and righteouſneſs*, (for ſo do many that are *called*, and are *not choſen*,) but they ſerve him in Both together *All the days of their Lives*; as *Zachary* goes on in his *Benedictus.* We muſt therefore ſo *diſtinguiſh* in our Diſcourſe of this ſubject between *The Regenerate* and *The Elect*, as ſtill to carry in our minds as well their *Difference* as their *Agreement.* In *This* they *agree*, that

that all *The Elect* are still *Regenerate*; In *This* they *differ*, that all *the Regenerate* are *not Elect*. The former *may* and *do* often, the later *cannot* fall finally from Grace. Concerning the *former*, and *Them alone*, all the Scriptures I have *urged* and *argued from* must be understood. For the *later* are onely They, who do **indure unto the End*. Onely They that *overcome*, and so are said *to have a right to the Tree of life*. The *Elect* are onely They, that *can finally never fall*; for if they could, they could not have been elected to life eternal.

* Matth. 24. 13.

Rev. 21. 7. & 22. 14.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

And yet even of *These* I am to say in the second place, that they fall *totally*, and for a *Time*, many of them, and of the *Best* too. Not onely *Solomon*, and *Aaron*, and *David himself* in the *Old Testament*, but *all* the *Apostles* in the *New*, and S. *Peter above them all*, are uncontroulable Examples of This sad Truth; if *Idolatry*, and *Adultery*, and *wilfull Murther*, if *Lying*, and *Cursing*, and *wilfull Perjury*, and a repeated *abjuration* of *Jesus Christ*, are Sins inconsistent with *saving Grace*, and the *inhabitation* of God the *Holy Ghost*. 'Tis true indeed that *The Elect* who *fall away* for a time into *Deadly Sins*, and so by consequence, whilst *impenitent*, into a *State* of *Damnation*, cannot possibly

poſſibly *die* 'till they have *repented*; becauſe *they have This Seal upon* them, *The Lord knoweth them that are His.* But This which is offer'd as an Anſwer to what I ſay, is an irrefragable *Argument* to *evince* the *Truth* of it. For if *David* (for example) could not *die* till he *repented*, it is for this reaſon onely, that he could not be *ſav'd without Repentance*; and that *before* he repented, he was in a *State* of *Condemnation.* Saving Grace and Impenitence cannot *ſimul & ſemel* be in one and the ſame Man. 'Tis the *Condition* of the *great and precious promiſes* in the Goſpel, and in effect the whole *Covenant* 'twixt *God* and *Man*, that *all* ſhall be ſaved *with* repentance, and *None without* it. *Hear ye me, Aſa, and all Judah, and Benjamin,* (ſaid *The Spirit* of God by *Azariah,*) *The Lord is with you, whilſt ye be with Him; and if ye ſeek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forſake him, he will forſake you.* So again by The Prophet *Ezekiel*, *When the righteous turneth from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, he ſhall even die thereby:* and *if the wicked walk in the Statutes of life, he ſhall ſurely live.* Promiſes and Threats are both alike *conditional*, not onely under the *Law*, but as expreſly under the *Goſpel.* It is the ſaying of *Chriſt himſelf*, *Whoſoever*

2 Chron. 15. 1, 2.

Ezek. 33. 18.

ver. 15.

soever shall confess me before men, Him shall the Son of man also confess before the Angels of God. But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God. 'Tis S. *Paul*'s to the Christians who were at *Rome* in his days, that *God will render to every man according to his works. To them who seek for Glory by continuance in well-doing, æternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, Indignation and Wrath.* And again, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body ye shall live.* And yet more plainly to our purpose, in his Epistle to the *Colossians*, *You who were Enemies in your minds by wicked works hath he reconcil'd, if ye continue in the faith grounded and setled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard.* And in like manner to the *Corinthians*, *Ye are saved by the Gospel, if ye hold fast or keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believ'd in vain.* The Epistle to the *Hebrews* is very full to this purpose, *We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the end. Whose House we are, if we hold fast the Confidence and the rejoycing of the hope firm unto the End. Now the Just*

Luk. 12. 8, 9.

Rom. 2. 6, 7, &c.

Ch. 8. v. 13.

Col. 1. 21, 23.

1 Cor. 15. 1, 2.

Heb. 3. 6, 14.

Heb. 10. 38, & 39.

ſhall live by Faith. But if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him. Plainly intimating in *This*, what is taken for granted in the very *next* verſe, that from *the ſame kind of Faith* by which it is ſaid *the Juſt ſhall live*, there were ſome in the beſt of Times who *drew back unto Perdition. Heb.* 10.39.

§ 11. What now is the *Advantage* we are to make of all This? and what the *Leſſon*, which all theſe Scriptures are *apt* to teach us? Truly the leſſon is plainly This: That if the *End* of our *Prayers*, if the *End* of our *Hopes*, the *End* of all our *Endeavours* is but *Conditional*, and All the *Promiſes* of the *Goſpel* are made unto us with an [*If we do ſo and ſo*,] we muſt not now boaſt of our being *Chriſtians*, as the *Hebrews* once did of their being *Iſraelites*. We muſt not glory in our being the *younger Brethren* or *Members* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, as They in their being *the Seed of Abraham*. We muſt not pride it in the *Church*, as They did commonly in the *Temple*. Nor *inſult* over the *Jews*, as *They* did fooliſhly over the *Gentiles*. For if God ſpared not *Them* who were the *natural Branches*, We muſt alſo *take heed, leſt he alſo ſpare not us*. If *They* were *broken off for their unbelief*, and we by Faith are *grafted in*, the proper *uſe* we are to make

Rom. 11.18, 19, 20,

make of the observation, is that *we boast not against the Branches*; that we *be not high-minded, but rather fear*; for *we bear not the Root, but the Root us.* We must consider both *the Goodness, and Severity of God*, and the *Grounds* of *Both: on them that fell, Severity*; *but towards us, Goodness*; with an *If we continue in his Goodness. Otherwise we shall be broken off too*; and *They shall be grafted in again, if they do not still abide in their unbelief.* We cannot reasonably desire a clearer State of this matter, than in That whole Passage of the *Eleventh Chapter* to the *Romans.* And therefore seeing it is imply'd by our blessed Lord, that *even The Salt of the Earth may lose its Savour*, and become *good for nothing*, but to be utterly *cast out, and trodden under foot*; that a *Branch* of the *true Vine* may lose its Verdure, and become good for nothing, but *to be cast into the Fire*; I thought it good (as S. *Peter* * speaks) to *put you in mind of these things, although ye know them already, and are established in the Truth.* And still I think it good (with the same S. *Peter*) to press *the giving all diligence for the making of our calling and election sure.* I think it good (with S. *Peter*) to say, *Beware, lest ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own* sted-

21, 22, 23. Matth. 5. 13. Joh. 15. 5, 6. * 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 15. & ch. 3. v. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 1. 10. ch. 3. v. 17.

ſtedfaſtneſs. If God was ſo *provoked* by the *Children of Iſrael*, (to whom the *Conditional*
Heb.3.11. *Promiſe* was made) that *he ſwore in his Wrath, they ſhou'd not enter into his Reſt*, becauſe they *fail'd* of the *Condition* on which the promiſe was made; Then I may ſure without Præſumption draw the very ſame *Uſe* from That tremendous matter of Fact, which the Inſpired Writer
ver. 12, makes in the very next Verſe, *Take heed, Brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.* But
13. *exhort one another daily whilſt it is call'd, To Day, leſt any of you be hardened through the de-*
Heb.4.1. *ceiptfulneſs of Sin.* And again, *Let us fear* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle) *leſt a Promiſe being left us of entring into his Reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it*, or ὑστερηκέναι, *to come behind it.* I may ſure without arrogance exhort the *Beſt* of my Hearers, much more my ſelf, and all other Chriſtians of my low Claſs, that
2 Cor.6.1. They and We *receive not the Grace of God in*
Heb.12.15. *vain.* That They and We do *look diligently, leſt any man fail of the Grace of God*; or leſt any *fall from it*, as it is in the Margin, and is ſufficiently imported by ὑστερεῖν ἀπὸ χάριτος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

§ 12. The Sum and Upſhot of all is This: There

There is in many *a Seed of Grace*, which does *never bring forth the fruit of Glory.* For as *The Spirit of Truth* makes none *Infallible* upon Earth, so *The Spirit of Holiness* makes none *impeccable*, none incapable of falling into any *Deadly Sin*, or a *Sin unto Death.* The reason is, because the *workings* of The *Spirit* are onely *congruous*, and *sufficient* upon voluntary Agents, never *compulsive*, and *irresistible.* From whence it follows that The *Degrees* of *Grace* and *Truth* in several persons, are not at all from God's *Omnipotence* as it is *such*, or from his *over-ruling Providence* as *over-ruling*, (for *Then* there could not be possibly such a *variety* of *Degrees*; All persons *Then* must have been *equally* good, and onely good in perfection;) But partly from the *different Dispositions*, and *Behaviours*, and *Negotiations* of the Subjects with the *Talents* of *Grace* committed to them, (which *some* are for **imploying*, and *some* for wrapping in a **Napkin*, as our Lord in his Parable was pleas'd to make it plain to us,) and partly from the *Measures* of The Spirit's *Communication*: which to *some*, is much *more*; to *others*, *less*; to *none*, *irresistable*; to *all*, *sufficient.* How very many there are that *fall* from that *Faith* and *Patience*, which in *Job* were two *Rocks*, which nothing

Mar. 4. 3, 4, &c. to verse 21.

*Luk. 19. 16, 20.

was strong enough to *shake*, much less to *shatter*, (and yet the Grace of God in *Him* was never *cogent*,) but being well * *rooted*, and very well *cultivated* besides, by daily exercises of Piety, and all good Works, [a] *grew up exceedingly* in his Soul, and did *not wither*; I say, how many there are that *fall* from their several Graces, that idly *waste*, and *misspend*, or wilfull *squander away* their Talents, I have hazarded your patience in making it plainer than there was need; by which excess if I have err'd, I am the rather to be forgiven, because it has proceeded from the sincerity of my Desire, to beget in such as *stand*, a *taking great heed that they do not fall.* And that our Adversary The Devil may never find *Us*, as the *Messengers* of the *Danites* found Them of *Laish*, dwelling *careless*, and *secure*, after the manner of the *Zidonians*, and *void of Business*; Let it be our *prime* Business, from this day forewards and for ever, not onely to watch and pray lest we enter into Temptation, but to reflect on the chief *Ends*, and the chief *Objects* of the Caution commended to us. The chiefest *Ends* of it are the *Glory of God*, and our *own Salvation.* Its chiefest *Objects* are the *Evils* of *Sin* and *Punishment*; the *Work itself*, and the *Wages* of it. But in calling these *The Chief*, I do imply there

* Col. 2. 7.

[a] 2 Thess. 1. 3.

Judg. 18. 7, 27.

there are *many more*. Even as many as there are *Dangers* wherewith we are every day *beſet*; and whereof in this Text we are adviſed to *take heed*.

§ 13. We have but *one* way to *ſtand*, But to *fall*, a *Thouſand*. Fall we may by our *Enemies*, which (*without* and *within* us) are not eaſily to be numbred. Thoſe *within* us, in our *Boſom*, are ſtill the *worſt*, becauſe the *neareſt*, and leaſt *ſuſpected*; and *then* moſt *hurtfull*, when moſt *Belov'd*. The worſt *without* us are our *Advancements* to Wealth and Honour, becauſe they are apter than any other, firſt to *lift up* our *heads*, then to *trip up* our *heeles*, and to *throw us down*. Many *ſtand*, when at the loweſt, ſtout and *ſtedfaſt in the Faith*, (as S. *Peter* ſpeaks,) who being *drunk* with *Proſperity*, do quickly *ſtagger*. And then how eaſily do they *fall*, Even at every little *thruſt* of *Applauſe*, or *Plenty*? Yea we may *fall*, without a Thruſt, by the bare *Treachery* of the *Ground* upon which we *ſtand*. Some Parts of it being too *ſlippery*, and ſome too *high*, and very dangerous are the *blocks* which are laid in *others*. Now 'tis plain the more *ſlippery* the *places* are we *ſtand* in, by ſo much the *apter* we are to fall. And 'tis as evident, that the *higher* our *Stations* are, by ſo much

much the *greater* our *fall* will be. But what the *stumbling-blocks* are which are laid in our *way* by some false Teachers, (besides those few already mention'd) and at which if we *stumble*, 'twill be *impossible not* to *fall*, deserves a *larger* Examination than can be made at this *Time*, and perhaps a *more Polemical* than can belong to *this Place*. In the mean time 'tis certain, that in proportion to the *dangers* there are of *falling*, the general *Caveat* of my Text does extend it self. *Take* we *heed* lest we *fall* for want of any of those things, which are conducible to our *Station* and *state* of *Grace*. Either for want of that *Knowledge* of things *Essential* to Religion, which is *requir'd*; or for want of that *Zeal* which is *according unto Knowledge*; or for want of that *Consideration* we ought to have, of what we know well enough does concern us neerly; or for want of that *Distrust* in our selves and others, to which the wise *Epicharmus* does well excite us. *Take* we *heed* we do *not fall* for want of carrying still about us *a fear of falling*. A fear both of our Natural, and of our adventitious Frailty. A fear of Him who alone holds us *up*, and when he will can throw us *down*. A fear of God, as he is *just*, but above all, as he is *mercifull*. *Because there is mercy with thee, O Lord*,

Lord, Therefore (ſaith *David*) *ſhalt thou be feared.* For the *abuſing* of his *mercy* does more than any other baſeneſs, *incenſe* his *Juſtice.* A Fear of *falling from* his *grace*, and by conſequence *out* of his *favour*, and by conſequence *into* his *wrath* and his *ſore diſpleaſure.* Pſal. 130. 4.

§ 14. Amidſt our *ſeveral* ways of *falling*, we have but *one* to *ſtand firm*, however diverſly expreſſed in *holy Writ.* I mean the congruous Aſſiſtance of God's free Grace, and our own working together with it. All the uſe S. *Peter* makes of his Apoſtaſie from *Chriſt* for a little time, is to put in a Caveat for Himſelf and Us too, *not to fall from our own ſtedfaſtneſs*; and the effectual way to That, is to *grow in Grace*, as he there exhorts us; Not to content our ſelves with this, that we are not any thing *worſe* than *we* uſe to be, but to be conſtantly advancing from ſtrength to ſtrength, and to be carefull that our laſt days may be our beſt too. All the uſe S. *Paul* makes of the Doctrine he had taught of a *Reſurrection*, is to be *ſtedfaſt, and unmoveable*; and the effectual way to that, is *always to abound in the work of the Lord.* So again we may infer from his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, The onely way for us *Impotent* and *Silly* men, *to be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the Devil, is to* 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Eph. 6. 11.

put upon our selves the whole Armour of God. To be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Implying a *full Trust in God*, and as full a *Distrustfulness of our selves.* A putting our selves out of our *own*, into *his* Protection. Which yet we cannot till convinced of this great truth, that *in* our selves, as *of* our selves there dwelleth no good thing. No not so much as *Inclination* to any thing that is *Good.* No not so much as *Aversation* from any thing that is *Evil.* That our *Destruction* [if it happens] is *of our selves*; But *all our sufficiency* of *him alone*, who stiles himself by way of Eminence, *the All-sufficient.* And hereunto we are to add this most pertinent supplication, (which must be *fervent* and *without ceasing*,) that he will be pleas'd to *work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, that so (having him for our **Coadjutor* in the language of our Apostle) *we may work out our Salvation with fear and trembling.* And that at the final consummation of all our days, he may crown his own Gifts and Graces in us. Which God of his Mercy dispose us for, for the Glory of his Name, and for the worthiness of his Son.

Phil. 3. 13.

* Συνεργοῦντες.

2 Cor. 6. 1.

To whom with the Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be Glory and Thanksgiving for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O F

OF PEACE AND HOLINESS UNITED,

As æqually required to Our

SALVATION.

HEB. 12. 14.

Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.

§ 1. AS there are but *two Ends* at which our Studies are to be levell'd, (let our Parts and our Learning be what they will,) to wit, a *Rectitude* in our *Knowledge*, and an

Exactneſs in our *Religion*; (the *firſt* of which is ſtill *ſubſervient* and has a *Tendency* to the *ſecond*;) ſo there are but Two things in which *This Second* does chiefly ſtand; to wit, a Rectitude of *Faith*, and the Truth of *Practice*. The *Former* does conſiſt in the Belief of two Things too, to wit, *That God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*, And, *as ſuch, is the Rewarder of Them that diligently ſeek him*. The *Later* lies chiefly in two Things more; Our *helping the fatherleſs in their Affliction*, and the *keeping of ourſelves unſpotted from the World*. Nor can we doubt whether in *Theſe* conſiſts the ſubſtance of our Religion, becauſe beſides that out of *Theſe* our *ſeveral Duties* may be deduc'd by the light of *Reaſon*, we have *Authority* alſo of *Scripture* (to wit, S. *Paul* and S. *James*) to aſſure us of it. Then why ſhould we *compaſs Sea and Land* to meet with Catechiſts, and Preachers, and Commentators, and School-Divines, a world of Fathers, and of Councils, and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians, and an hundred other Inſtruments for the completing of a *Chriſtian*, (however neceſſary they are for the accompliſhment of a *Divine*) whilſt *Chriſtianity* in it ſelf is a thing ſo *eaſie*, and may eaſily be held in ſo *little Room*? Had it beeen ſuffer'd to

2 Cor. 5. 19.
Heb. 11. 6.
Jam. 1. 27.

to abide within its primitive Simplicity, in but few and plain *Precepts* for *Life* and *Practice*, as well as in few and plain *Aphorisms* for *Faith* and *Doctrin*; the *Yoke* of *Christ* had still been *easie*, and his *Burthen* had still been *light*, and *little Children* had still been qualified for a Discipleship under *Christ*, which yet is now made *too difficult* for some of the *subtil'st* and the *learnedst* of all our *Jesuiticall* and *Sorbon Doctors*. Nothing has certainly been so mischievous to the *true Body* of *Religion*, as the making so *many* Mysteries where God was pleas'd to have so *few*; vexing the Articles of our Faith with curious *Quæstions*, and *Disputes*, and a large Catalogue of *Additions*, (as for example in the *Creed* of Pope **Pius Quartus*,) most obstructive to the *Unity* and *Peace* of Christians. So that by *accident* at least, and through the *Lust* of her several Lovers, (I mean the *Avarice* of *some*, and the *Pride* of *others*,) the charming *Beauty* of Religion has contributed too much to the *Ruin* of her. She having been courted as unhappily, as *Plutarch*'s fair *Aristoclea*; who was so plucked at by the Rivalry of *Calisthenes* and *Strato*, and by the Partizans of them Both; *that (to their shame and sorrow too,) She lost her Life in the Contention.

* *Vid.* Laërt. *Cherub.* Bullar. Tom. 2. *p.* 129.

* Ἕως ἔλαθεν ἡ πειθὼ ἐν χερσὶν ἡμῶν ἀνθελκόντων διαφθαρεῖσα. Plut. ἐν ἐρωτ. Διηγ. p. 772. *Id quod accidit Aristoni Melissi filio, qui* ἀνθελκόμενος διεφθάρη. *Id. ibid.*

§ 2. Now conſidering how much 'tis eaſier to have an Excellence in the *Knowledge*, than in the *Exerciſe* or *Practice* of Chriſtianity, And that without our Indeavours of *living up* to ſuch *Knowledge*, All our *learning* will but *light us* into the Territories of *Darkneſs*; Little or Nothing will be got by our moſt plauſible Attainments, beſides the Meagre Satisfaction of going *learnedly* to *Hell*, and *the Priviledge to be beaten with many ſtripes*, whilſt the more *ignorant* Tranſgreſſor muſt be contented with a *few*; I cannot think of a fitter Text for the giving advantage to my Deſign of ſetting up the moſt *Uſefull* and *Real* learning, in the place of *That learning* wherewith *the Devil* is oft *adorn'd*, (to uſe the words of S. *Jerome* touching the Excellence of *Pelagius*,) than this important *Exhortative* of our learned Author to the *Hebrews*; recommending to them the *Study* of *Peace* and *Holineſs*, as That on which there dependeth (as it is *followed*, or *deſpis'd*,) an unſpeakable *Proportion* of *Bliſs*, or *Miſery*. Theſe are the *Sciences*, and the *Arts*, which will make us *wiſe unto Salvation*. We are to *ballance* all our *Knowledge* with theſe *two Weights*, whereby to preſerve it from *puffing up*. Theſe are to take up our *Meditations*; on Theſe our *Souls* are to be

be *fixt*. These are the *Beauties* we are to *court*, with the greatest *Love*. These the *Riches* we are to *covet*, with greatest *Avarice*. These the *Dignities* to be sought for, not onely with the greatest, but best *Ambition*. And therefore every thing else being laid aside, (at least with a *comparative*, though not an *absolute* Neglect,) we are to give our selves wholly to the Study of These Two; *Following Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

§ 3. Though the Text at first Hearing may seem as *easie* as it is *short*, yet there is hardly any thing in it, which stands not in need of an *Explication*; And The *English Translation* is so much harder than the *Original*, as that we cannot reach the *One*, without recourse unto the *other*. *Follow* Peace, saith the *English*. *Pursue it earnestly*, saith the *Greek*. It is not every kind of Following will serve the Turn; for 'tis not ἕπεσθε, *sequimini*, but διώκετε, *persequimini*, and we know, The word διώκειν has a remarkable Importance, implying *Industry*, and *Eagerness*, in seeking That that we desire. Εἰρήνην διώκετε, *hunt after* Peace. Διώκετε ἀγάπην, *run apace* after Holiness. As if the Apostle should have said, that *Peace and Holiness* are things to be *contended* for and *Courted*, with great *Ambition*. We must

muſt not *follow* them *ſo*, as to come *behind* them; but rather *ſo* as to *overtake* them. So as the *Racer* follows the *Prize*; or ſo as the *Hound* follows the *Hare*; or ſo as the man of *Contention* does greedily *follow* a ſuit in *Law*; or ſo as S. *Paul* does elſewhere urge us *to follow after Charity*. For each of theſe is Imported by the emphatical word διώκετε, implying *zeal* in our Chriſtian Duties, and *Perſeverance unto the End*.

§ 4. After the *Nature* of the *Act*, conſider the *latitude* of the *Object*. Which though expreſs'd by a Contraction into theſe two Branches, *Peace*, and *Holineſs*; yet like a Couple of great *Arms*, they do *imbrace* the whole *Decalogue*, by the large extent of their ſignification. For by *Peace* is meant *Charity*, in which all *Juſtice* is folded up; And thence is ſaid by S. *Paul* to be *the fulfilling of the Law*, (taken There in an *extended*, as Here it is in a *ſtinted* ſenſe,) becauſe according to the Rule amongſt moral Philoſophers, [ἐν ᾗ Δικαιοσυνὴ συλλήβδην πᾶσ' ἀρετ' ἔστι,] *Juſtice* is a Παναρετὸν, (as the Eaſtern Fathers do call the Book of *Eccleſiaſticus*;) a comprehenſive kind of *Pandect* of *all* manner of Duties. For as S. *John*, in his firſt Epiſtle, has reduced all *Vices* to theſe three Heads,

Heads, *The Luſt of the Fleſh*, *the Luſt of the Eye*, and *the Pride of Life*; ſo S. *Paul*, ſpeaking to *Titus*, compriſeth all *Vertues* in this Trichotomy, *Living ſoberly*, *righteouſly*, *and godly in this preſent World*. Now to *live righteouſly* what is it, but to do *juſtice* unto our *Neighbours*? What, to *live ſoberly*, but to be *juſt* unto *our ſelves*? (not to abuſe our own *Perſons* by any Intemperance or Debauch?) And what, to *live Godly*, but to deal *juſtly* with *God* himſelf? (not to *rob* him of the *ſervice*, nor to *defraud* him of the *honour* that's due unto him?) The firſt is included in the word *Peace*, (taken here as it is in a ſtinted ſenſe,) the ſecond and the third in the word *Purification*. I ſay, *Purification*, becauſe 'tis literally the Engliſh of the Word ἁγιασμὸς, which in our Engliſh Tranſlation is render'd *Holineſs*.

§ 5. And this deſerves to be the Subject of a *third Conſideration*. For it is not εἰρήνη καὶ ἁγιωσύνη, *Peace and Purity*, which notes the *Habit* of being *Clean*; But 'tis εἰρήνη καὶ ἁγιασμὸν, *Peace and Purification*,, which notes the *continued Act* of *cleanſing*. Betwixt which two, there is not onely a very *great*, but an *uſefull* Difference. For hence we learn that whilſt we live, we muſt evermore be on the *mending* hand.

Muſt never look upon our ſelves as *good enough to ſerve turn.* But as a Pot of boyling water is ever caſting up a Foam, until it is *purged* of all its *Filth*; ſo we muſt daily be *caſting out* ſomewhat or other which is *amiſs*; ever *buſie* in the work of our *Reformation*; ever *mending*, and *purging*, and *purifying* our ſelves. Seeing 'tis
1 Joh. 3 3. ſaid by S. *John*, that *he who hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf even as God is pure.* We muſt not content our ſelves (for *ſhame*) with a *ſtunted Piety*, with the Reproach of being *Dwarfs* in the School of *Chriſt*; But *grow* in Grace (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks:) Nor muſt we ever *leave growing*, until we come to a *perfect man.* And thus to Peace we are to *add* Purification. For they are not *joyn'd* with a *Disjunctive*, (it is not follow Peace or Holineſs) as if the *one* were ſufficient without the *other*; But Theſe *Unitedly* are the things, which muſt be *proſecuted*, and *follow'd*, with *Zeal*, and *Fervour.*

§ 6. And then in the fourth place, there is great *Reaſon* for it. Becauſe if either of theſe is wanting, οὐδεὶς ὄψεται, *No man living ſhall ſee the Lord.* Let his *Parts*, or *Acquiſitions*, be what they can be; Let his *Principles*, or his *Party*, let his *Perſon*, or *Profeſſion*, be what they

they will; Let him be born of *Godly Parents*, let him be carefully brought up within the *Bosom of the Church*, let him be *Papist*, or *Puritan*, or in the *middle* of each Extreme, A sober *Protestant*; let his pretensions be what they will to *Regeneration*, or *Election*; yet unless he follows *Peace*, and Peace with *All Men*, and *Purification* as well as Peace, and unless he follows Both with *Faith* and *Patience* unto the *End*, He is a Man of *impurer Eyes*, then can ever be admitted *to see the Lord*.

§ 8. Thus *We* see what is meant by *peace* and *holiness*, and as well for what *reason*, as after what *sort* we must *follow* both. There are *three other Things* which will deserve an Explication, but That will best of all be made by way of *Answer to three Objections*. For a *Conquering* Truth is much *more glorious*, than a Truth *unexamin'd*, or *unattempted* with *opposition*.

§ 9. First it may easily be douted, whether 'tis *Possible*, or *Safe*, to have Peace with *All* men. For *some* are such *Enemies unto* Peace, *that when we speak to them thereof, they make them ready to Battle*; and Peace with *such* does seem *impossible*. And *Impossibilium nulla est obligatio*. It cannot be *necessary* to *do*, what is *Impossible* to be *done*. *Others* are always at *war* with *God* by

Rom. 1. 30. their Impieties, they are κακῶν ἐφευρεταὶ, *Inventors of evil Things*; nay θεοστυγεῖς, *Haters of God*; and Peace with *ſuch* does ſeem *unſafe*. For may we be at Peace with *them*, who will not be at Peace with *God*? Theſe are They that in Scripture are call'd *The World*. And *know ye*

Jam. 4. 4. *not* (ſaith S. *James*) *that the Friendſhip of the world is Enmity with God?* Theſe are they that in Scripture are call'd *the Wicked*. And *there is no Peace ſaith my God to the wicked*. (*Iſa*. 57. 21.) Which though ſpoken in *another*, may yet be apply'd in *this* ſenſe alſo. When men

* 2 Joh. 11. are *ſcandalouſly* wicked, * an Apoſtle forbids us *to eat or drink with them*; or *to receive them into our houſes*; or *to bid them God-ſpeed*. And as this was the *Precept* of that Apoſtle, ſo according unto this he fram'd his *Practice*. For with the Heretick *Cerinthus* he would not be in the ſame *Bath*. The Heathen Poet *Horace* was thus affected in his *Vetabo ſub iiſdem ſit trabibus, Fragilemque mecum ſolvat phaſelum*. So ſaid *Moſes* to the *Royaliſts* touching the *Rebels* which then aroſe againſt *Him* and *Aaron*; *Depart from the Tents of theſe wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs*. Beſides that as much as in us lies, we ought to be affected like *God himſelf*; and ſo by a neceſſary conſequence we are to *hate* thoſe that

that *hate* Him, because they are *such* as are *hated* by Him. (For so the word στυγεῖς does very naturally import, although it is not observ'd in our English Bibles.) And therefore by *this* the Prophet *David* seeks to *prove* his *Affection* to God Almighty; *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? yea I hate them right sore.* Or (as the New Translation hath it) *yea I hate them with a perfect hatred.* Why then saith our Apostle, *Follow* Peace *even with All men*, not excepting the *Worst* of all?

§ 10. We see the Objection is very specious. But strike one Text against another, (as a flint against steel,) and there will leap from both together both *Fire* and *Light* too. The Answer to it is to be taken from *Rom.* 12. 18. and thence forwards unto the end. *If it is possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.* He does not peremptorily say, live peaceably with all men *at all adventure, let the Case be what it will.* But εἰ δυνατὸν, *if it is possible*, and τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν, *as much as in you lies.* Whereby 'tis evidently imply'd, that in diverse hard cases *it is Impossible*, it does *not lie in our power* to be at Peace with all the world. All that God requires of us, is to imploy our poor *utmost* in order to it. Whilst we hate the *Malefactor*, we must

have charity for the *Man*; ſo as to *pity* his being *ſick* of habitual *Sin*, and *ſupplicate God* for his *Amendment*. *Follow* Peace we muſt with *Them*, who *fly* as faſt as we can *follow* it. And to the end we may attain it, we muſt *endeavour* at leaſt to *win* them by all good means. Such as is the *not avenging our ſelves*, *but giving place unto wrath*; *feeding our Enemies when they are hungry*, and when they are *thirſty* giving them *Drink*. For *by ſo doing*, *we ſhall heap* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Coals of Fire upon their Heads*. Not that this can be ſpoken of any *miſchievous* kind of charity; For it is meant of nothing elſe but the *Fire of Love*. And *Love* is fitly compar'd to *Fire*, becauſe it has both a *purging* and *melting* Faculty in its Nature. The *Metaphor* is taken from the cuſtom of the *Founder*, who when he cannot *melt* his *Metal* by putting Coals of Fire *under* it, does heap ſome Fire *upon* it too. So we muſt heap the *Fire of Love* upon our Enemies Heads, not to *conſume* them in their *Impenitence*, but to *melt* them into *Repentance* and *change of Life*. At once to *purifie* the *Droſs*, and to *mollifie* the *hardneſs*, with which their hearts are affected towards us. But if at laſt our *Malacticks* are us'd in vain, we muſt *then* indeed proceed to the *ſeverer* Methods

thods of *Charity*, which is *Charity never the leſs* for being attended with *ſeverity*. A *Rod* being ordain'd for the *Back* of *Fools*, who will not be wrought upon at all by the *Spirit of Meekneſs*. (1 *Cor.* 4. *ult.*) When men are the *worſe* for being *pardon'd*, and even *corrupt* themſelves with Goodneſs, we muſt not be ſo *over-cruel*, as to *puniſh* them with *Impunity*. For God in great *Mercy* hath given us *Magiſtrates*, to be his *Miniſters of wrath*, and his *Executers of vengeance*. Nor are they liable unto *any* more noxious failing, than that of *bearing the Sword in vain*. Hereon is founded both the *Lawfulneſs*, and the *Neceſſity* alſo of *War* upon ſome Occaſions, as being That without which *Peace it ſelf* cannot be *kept*. The Law of *Nature*, and of *Nations*, That of *Moſes*, and of *Chriſt*, and the beſt mens *Examples* permit it to us. As it were eaſie to evince, were This a Time or Place for it. And what I ſay of the *Civil*, is juſt as true of the *Spiritual Sword*. The higheſt Act of Chriſtian charity that can be ſhown to the obdurate, is *to deliver them up to Satan for the Deſtruction of the Fleſh*; becauſe it is to this wholeſom end, That *their Spirits may be ſav'd in the Day of the Lord Jeſus*. (1 *Cor.* 5. 5.) Thus we ſee what is meant by *Peace with All men*;

men ; how far forth it is *extended*, and how it admits of a *Limitation*.

§ 11. Another Objection may be rais'd from the Pronoun [*Which*] becauſe it is in the Greek, not οὗ, but ὅ, and ſo may ſeem to relate rather to *Holineſs*, than to *Peace*. As if our Duty towards *God* were a great Requiſite to Salvation, but *not* our Duty towards our *Neighbour*. Whereas in Truth the very *diſcharge* of our Duty towards our *Neighbour*, is one of the great and main Duties we owe to *God*. Peace and Holineſs are ſuch *Twin-Siſters*, as are not like the *Tindaridæ*, or *Twins of Leda*, who (after the manner of two Buckets, whereof the one is going up, and the other down,) did *take their Turns* in Heaven, and Heli ; But like the *Twins of Hippocrates*, or the two Friends in *Valerius*, who neither could *live*, nor *die* aſunder. He that *follows* not *Peace*, does *fly* from *Holineſs* ; or *follows* it onely to *drive* it *from* him. Why then ſaith our Apoſtle, not χωρὶς οὗ, without which *Things*, nor χωρὶς ἧς, without which *Peace*, but χωρὶς ὅ, without which *Holineſs*, no man living ſhall ſee the Lord ?

§ 12. The Anſwer is, that the word ὅ, is of an *æquivocal* ſignification ; as being equally of the *Maſculine*, and *Neuter* Gender. But ſome

ſome there are in the world of eminent Learning and Reputation, who taking it up by the *wrong handle*, have unhappily faſtened upon a wrong ſignification, and ſo have ſet up *Holineſs* to the *prejudice* of *Peace*. Meerly for want of conſideration, That the Relative [*Which*] in this place is the *Neuter Gender*, and hath not any *ſingle word* for its Antecedent, but the *whole Clauſe* going before. It is not in a *divided* ſenſe, χωρὶς ἣ ἁγιασμοῦ, without which *Holineſs*, but *in ſenſu compoſito*, χωρὶς ἣ διώκειν τ εἰρήνην καὶ ἁγιασμὸν, without which *Following* of Peace and Holineſs united. Whereby we are given to underſtand, That there cannot be ſuch a Thing as a *Godly Rebel*, or Holy *Boutifeu*, becauſe the *Subject* excludes the *Adjunct*. To ſay that ſuch or ſuch a Man is a moſt *conſcionable Schiſmatick*, or a *religious exciter* unto *Sedition*, (whilſt he *fights away* his *Conſcience* to win its *Liberty*, and ſacrifices *Peaces* to pretended *Holineſs*,) is to affirm *both Parts* of a *Contradiction*. He that is of an *unpeaceable*, muſt needs be of an *unholy* Spirit. For as *Peace* without Holineſs is but *Adherence unto a Faction*; ſo *Holineſs* without Peace is but *Hypocriſie*. They that are ſo *ſuperſtitious* as to *ſtrain at Gnats*, (ſuch as the Authorized Rites of *Croſs* and *Surpliſs*,)

whilſt they are alſo ſo *prophane* as to *ſwallow Camels*, (ſuch as are the crying Sins of *Schiſm*, and *Sacrilege*,) cannot well be call'd *Followers*, but onely *Perſecuters* of Peace, (and *that* indeed is *one Senſe* of the word Διώκω.) Nor can we ſay they are *Poſſeſſors*, but onely *Perſonators* of Holineſs. I am not willing to be ſo *rigid*, and do heartily wiſh it were *falſe* to ſay, That they are really nothing elſe but the *Apes* of *Satan*; who is *Then* at his *worſt* the *Prince* of *Darkneſs*, when he transforms himſelf the moſt into an *Angel of Light*. So ſaid our *Saviour*, and ſo S. *Paul*. And from *both* we may infer, That of *all* the *Hypocrites* in the world, the *Devil* himſelf is the moſt *Demure*; and by being ſuch indeed, is the *more* a *Devil*. Thus we ſee what is meant by the Relative [*Which*] in this Place, and what *uſe* we are to make of its *Antecedent*.

Object. 3. § 13. But what may laſt of all be meant by *ſeeing the Lord* in this Text, that our Apoſtle ſhould ſet it down as the greateſt *Recompence of Reward*, to ſuch as are *Followers of Peace and Holineſs*? When *Moſes* deſired to *ſee the Lord*, and therefore earneſtly *pray'd* that God would

Exod. 33. 18. *ſhew him his Glory*; The very *Mercy* of God's *Anſwer* did conſiſt in the *Reaſon* of his *Denial*.

Thou

Thou canſt not ſee my Face; for there is no man ſhall ſee me and live. And therefore *Gideon himſelf*, although a *mighty man of Valour*, (as God himſelf is pleas'd to call him) a man as ſtout as the *ſteel* with which his Proverbial *Sword* was temper'd, was yet exceedingly afraid, as ſoon as he perceiv'd he had *ſeen an Angel of the Lord.* And ſo it was with good reaſon that *Manoah* ſaid unto his Wife, *We ſhall ſurely Die, becauſe we have ſeen God.* And if theſe things are ſo, that we cannot *ſee God*, without the danger of *ſudden Death*; It may ſeem a *ſad* thing for a man to be a *Follower of Peace and Holineſs*, becauſe by that means he ſhall *ſee the Lord.* But

ver. 20.

Judg. 6. 22.

Judg. 13. 22.

§ 14. The Anſwer to this is extreamly obvious. It being no more than to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Eyes of our *vile*, and of our *glorified* Bodies. If we behold him with the *firſt*, we ſhall find him indeed a *conſuming Fire.* But when we ſhall ſee him with the *ſecond*, we ſhall find him nothing leſs than a *quickening Light.* Here our Eyes are ſo carnal, that it very much hurts us to ſee the *Sun*, unleſs we ſee him in his *Reflexion*, or at leaſt through the *veil* of ſome *Diaphanous Body.* And if the *Brightneſs* of the *Sun* is enough to ſtrike the Beholder *Blind*;

Anſwer.

How can we ſafely gaze on *Him*, to whom the *Sun* is but a *Shadow?* Yet after *the Time of Reſtitution*, when what is *ſown* in *weakneſs* ſhall be *raiſed* again in *power*; Then our *Life* will conſiſt in the *ſight* of God. We *then* ſhall *ſee him as he is*, no longer *darkly as in a Glaſs*, but *face to face*; and that with infinite *Pleaſure*, as well as *Eaſe*. And this alone is that Viſion, which is alluded to in the Text. Without an earneſt Proſecution of *Peace* and *Holineſs* in conjunction, no one ſhall be qualified to *live* by *ſeeing*, what here he cannot *ſee and live*. None ſhall enter *within the Veil*, or be made a partaker of the *Beatifick Viſion*. None ſhall wait on his Throne in *whoſe preſence is Life*, and where there are *Pleaſures for evermore*.

§ 15. Thus in the Suit of the *Explication*, we have (before we are aware) a full *Diviſion* of the Text. And not ſo only, but alſo practical Reflections on all its parts.

Firſt, We have ſeen a *ſingle Act* of great Moment. And Secondly, How 'tis fixt on a *double Object*. The double Object is *Peace* and *Holineſs*, which, according to the Scope of the word διώκετε, (ſhewing the *Energie*, and the *Force* of the *ſingle Act*,) are to be Proſecuted and follow'd with *Zeal* and *Fervour*.

Next

Next to the *Act*, and the *Object*, which are sufficiently *expres's'd*, we have their *absolute Necessity* very significantly *imply'd*. For *these* are set as the *Condition*, on which alone we arrive at *Bliss*. It is for *none* to *see God*, but *the pure in heart*. And therefore *this* is a cogent *Reason*, for the *fastening* of the *Act* on the Double *Object*. For the *Intensiveness* of the *one*, and the *Extensiveness* of the *other*. Matth. 5. 8.

§ 16. But now because it is impossible, that men should *eagerly pursue* their Christian Duties, whilst they believe them to be *needless*, or *gainless* Things; Things which *rob* them of their happiness in this *present* World, and *without* which they may be happy in That *to come*: We must possess our selves more fully than we have hitherto done, not onely with the *Nature* of Peace and Holiness, but more especially (and in the first place) with their *absolute Necessity to life æternal*; whereof unless we throughly convince our selves, we cannot hope (with any reason) to ingage our Resolutions to *follow* Both.

§ 17. First, For the word *Peace*, it is that that comprehends our whole Duty towards our *Neighbour*, and as well to our *Enemies*, as to our *Friends*. For how can we follow Peace

with *All men* in ſo *earneſt* a manner as the word διώκετε does import, unleſs we labour, by forgiveneſs, *to overcome evil with good*, (*Rom.*12. *ult.*) much more muſt we *render unto every man his Due*, *Tribute to whom Tribute*, *Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom*, *Honour to whom Honour*, *Fear to whom Fear*, (*Rom.*13.7.) and ſo by analogy of Proportion, Service to vvhom Service, Love to vvhom Love, *no injury* to vvhom *no injury* is due. (For every *Injury* is *breach* of *Peace*.) We muſt *owe no man any thing*, *but to love one another*, *Rom.*13.8. And therefore *injure* him vve muſt not, no not ſo much as in *deſire*. This is to follow Peace indeed, when we do not onely *not* give a *Cauſe*, but *not* ſo much as an *occaſion* of juſt offence. When we keep not onely our *Hands*, but even our *Heads* and our *Hearts* from picking and ſtealing. When we do not commit *Adultery*, no not ſo much as with our *Eyes*. When we do *no Murther*, no not ſo much as in our *wiſhes*. When we *diſhonour* not our *Parents* (whether *private* or *publick*, *Eccleſiaſtical*, or *Civil*,) not not ſo much as in our *Wills*. This is, as much as in us lies, to make an eager *Proſecution of Peace with all men*. Which comprehends our whole Obedience to the *Second Table* of the *Law*.

§ 18. Se-

§ 18. Secondly, As *Peace* does graſp the *whole Duty* of *Man* to *Man*, ſo we may ſay alſo of *Holineſs*, that 'tis the *whole immediate Duty* of *Man* to *God*. Which more eſpecially conſiſteth in theſe three Things: In preſerving our *Loyalty*, in exhibiting our *Reverence*, and laſtly, in rendring our *Active Service*. The firſt, hath reſpect unto our *Thoughts*, the ſecond, unto our *Words*, the third, unto our *Actions*. Firſt, for *Loyalty*, *That* (we know) is a vertue, by which a Servant does acknowledge *no* Maſter but his *own*, holds *no Intelligence* with his *Enemies*, admits *no Rival* in his *Affections*, but ever honours him, and owns him, and *adheres* to *him alone* againſt all Pretenders. And This is that which is commanded in the two firſt Precepts of the Decalogue. *Thou ſhalt have no God but me. Thou ſhalt not make any graven Images, to bow down to them, or worſhip them.* This is holineſs in *Thought*. Which however 'tis *Neceſſary*, is not *enough*; And therefore to *this* we muſt add our *Reverence*. *That* we know to be a vertue which is equally compounded of *Love* and *Fear*, and by which an *Inferiour* does ſpeak with *Awe*, concerning any one above him whom he does *honour* or *admire*. And this is that which is commanded in the

Vid. Catech. Card. Richl.

the third Precept of the Decalogue. *Thou ſhalt not lift up the name of thy God in vain.* Thou ſhalt not onely *not* uſe it *falſly*, but *not* ſo much as upon *trivial* and *ſlight Occaſions.* This is holineſs in *Word.* Which, however it is *Neceſſary*, is not enough neither. And therefore to this there muſt be added our *active Service. That* (we know) is an *execution* of what our *Maſter* gives us in *charge.* And (as an acknowledgment of *Supremacy*, as well as of *Maintenance*, and *Protection*,) a *ſetting aſide* our *own* buſineſs, that we may *wholly attend* upon our *Maſter*'s. And this is that which is commanded in the fourth Precept of the Decalogue, *Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath Day.* Six days are allowed thee to do thine *own* buſineſs; but the ſeventh is ſet apart, in the ſeventh thou ſhalt do *no manner of Work.* No manner of work which is thine *own*, but *all manner of work* which is thy Maſter's. Not onely *acts* of *Sacrifice*, (ſuch as our Duties in the Church,) but works of *Juſtice*, and *Mercy* too. For theſe indeed are the things, in which eſpecially conſiſteth the *Sanctification of a Sabbath*, and are call'd by our Saviour *the weightier matters of the Law.* This is *holineſs* in *action.* And ſo we ſee the *three things*, where-

in

in our *holineſs* is to conſiſt; which comprehends our whole obedience to the *firſt Table* of the *Law*.

§ 19. I have the rather been thus *plain* in ſhewing the *Latitude* and the *Nature* of theſe *Grand Duties*, that the *exactneſs* of our *Knowledge* may be our *Directory* to *Practice*. It being *neceſſary* to know what it is *neceſſary* to practiſe, Holineſs towards God, and Peace with all men. For whilſt we are told by our Apoſtle, that *without theſe two*, there will be no ſeeing of God, we are as good as aſſur'd by God himſelf, that *Theſe* preciſely are the *Terms* on which Salvation is to be had. Inſomuch that if either of theſe is wanting, there's no *eſcaping* the *Pains* of *Hell*, nor any *attaining* the *Joys* of *Heaven*. And therefore after their *Nature*, I am to ſpeak of their *Neceſſity*, their *abſolute Neceſſity* to *Life eternal*.

§ 20. And firſt, Obſerve how *other* Scriptures do hold conformity with *This*. Without theſe two, we cannot poſſibly make our *Calling* and *Election ſure*. Not the firſt, For *we have boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of Jeſus, that we may draw near with a pure Heart, having our Hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience*. (*Heb.*10.19.22.) Nor yet the ſecond,

For *God hath choſen us in his Son, that we ſhould be Holy, and without Blame.* (*Eph.* 1.4.) Without theſe two, our *Juſtification* vvill be in *vain.* For *God* did therefore *Reconcile us when we were Enemies in our Minds by wicked works, that he might preſent us Holy, and Unblameable, and Unreproveable in his ſight.* (*Coloſ.* 1.22.) Without theſe two, vve loſe the *End*, and ſo do fruſtrate the *Work* of our *Redemption.* For our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf for the Church, that he might preſent it unto himſelf a Glorious Church, that it ſhould be Holy, and without Blemiſh.* (*Eph.*5.25.27.) Without theſe two, vve loſe the Benefit of the *Rod*, and do partake of That as *Baſtards*, which is intended to us as *Sons.* For as vve are told by the Apoſtle, that *if we are without chaſtiſement, then are we Baſtards, and not Sons*; ſo he preſently adds, that *God correcteth us for our profit, to make us Partakers of his Holineſs.* (*Heb.*12.10.) In a vvord, Without an *earneſt proſecution* of *Peace and Holineſs United*, (for I have ſhewed that the *one* cannot ſubſiſt vvithout the *other*,) vve loſe the *Benefit* of *Grace*, and ſo evacuate the *Means* of our *Glorification.* For *we all with open face, behold as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the Lord, that we may be changed into the ſame Image, from Glory*

Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 *Cor.*3.18.)

§ 21. Nor have vve onely ſtore of *Scripture*, but *Reaſon* for it. For if Salvation vvere to be had by *appearing Righteous unto men*, The *greateſt* Hypocrites would become the *moſt glorious Saints*. If by the *ſtoutneſs* of a *Belief*, or by a *Hope without doubting*, None would be happier than the *preſumptuous*, and ſuch as are *carnally ſecure*. If by the *Latitude* of a *Knowledge*, or by the *Rectitude* of *Opinions*, it would be better ſure with none than the *Lapſed Angels*; who are as *Knowing*, and as *Orthodox*, as any meer man can be thought to be. *Heaven* would *Then* be a kind of *Jayl*, full of the *guiltieſt Malefactors*. The *Error* of the *Origeniſts* would preſently paſs into a *Truth*, and the *worſt* of *Devils* receive the Benefit of a *Redemption*. But no man's reaſon will yield to *That*. For whoſoever does but believe there is a *Heaven* and a *Hell*, muſt grant that the *one* is for the *Recompence* of the *Good*, and the *other* for the *Puniſhment* of *Evil Doers*. Which ſhews the *abſolute Neceſſity* of *Peace* and *Holineſs*; being as 'twere the *two Eyes*, without which it is impoſſible *to ſee the Lord*.

§ 22. But here withall we are to take an eſpecial Care, that we do not divide the conſi-

deration of their *Nature* from the conſideration of their *Neceſſity*; but ſtill conſider what it is wherein our holineſs is to *conſiſt*, as well as what it is which *depends upon* it. For through the want of this Caution, the empty *Picture* of Holineſs is oft miſtaken for the *Life*; there are that think themſelves *Holy*, when indeed they are *Hypocritical*, and many hope to be *ſav'd* for their being *Cheats*. There were *Profeſſors* amongſt the *Jews*, who were indeed very punctual in the worſhip of *God*, and thence concluded they were The *Godly*; but 'twas a worſhip which conſiſted in the outward *waſhing of Cups* and *Platters*, in external *Rites* and legal *Ceremonies*, (which were but *ſhadows of things to come*,) *in ſtreading forth their hands*, and *making Prayers for a pretenſe*, in *faſting often to appear Righteous unto men*, in *keeping Sabbaths and new Moons*, in *building the Tombs of the Prophets*, *and adorning the Sepulchers of the righteous*; when all the while they *neglected the weightier matters of the Law*, *Judgment*, *Mercy*, and *Faith*. They did *ſo* pull the *Motes* out of *other* mens Eyes, as not at all to ſee the *Beams* in their *own*. They did *ſo* ſtrain at *Gnats*, as to ſwallow *Camels*; for they *devoured* even *Orphans and Widows Houſes*, (Camels

Thoſe

Thoſe with a witneſs) and were *partakers with their Fathers in the blood of the Prophets*, and ſo were far from being Followers of Peace and Holineſs, unleſs as *Worldlings follow* their Traffick for *filthy Lucre*; dealing as *Huckſters* in Religion, and *Trading* in Godlineſs, as 'tis an *Inſtrument* onely of *Gain*. For they were call'd by our Saviour, (even then when at the Top of their *painted holineſs*,) not onely *Serpents*, and *Vipers*, but *Brands of Hell too*, ſuch as *could not eſcape Damnation*. (*Matth.*23.33.) Nor are there wanting amongſt us *Chriſtians*, who are religiouſly carefull to ſprinkle themſelves with *holy-water*, to ſay a *chapletfull* of *Ave Maries*, to viſit the *Sepulchers* of the *Saints*, to croſs their *Foreheads* and their *Breaſts*, and to ſalute ye every Morning *in nomine Domini*. Nay ſome there are amongſt us *Proteſtants* (for 'tis fit we ſhould be *juſt* in our Obſervations,) who place a great deal of vertue in an exact *coming to Church*, in daily *reading ſo many Chapters*, in *lifting up to heaven both hands and eyes*, in *walking ſoftly*, and *looking ſadly*, and *hanging down the head* now and then like a *Bull-ruſh*; and ſo we may ſay they have attain'd *to an handſom Outſide of Religion*, that they are *well-faſhion'd Chriſtians*, as addreſſing themſelves

to God with a *Civil Carriage*, (ſuch as well behav'd *Enemies* do ſeldom fail of,) But ſo far from being *Followers* of *Peace* and *Holineſs*, that they want the very *Body*, much more the *Soul* of Chriſtianity, whilſt they will rather ſow the Seeds of the moſt *execrable Rebellion*, than comply vvith Superiours in things *Indifferent*, vvhich *cannot but* be lawfull, *becauſe* Indifferent; and not onely *lawfull*, but *binding* too, as ſoon as the ſignature of *Authority* is *ſtamp'd* upon Them. Do Theſe men think there is a *God*, or a *Devil*, a *Corruption* of the *Body*, or *Immortality* of the *Soul*, an Hour of *Death*, or a Day of *Judgment*, vvho vvill rather *break Peace* vvith all their *Governours*, than ſubmit to the uſe of a *Publick Liturgy*, vvhich is not onely *lawfull*, but tranſcendently *good*, ſo long as eſtabliſh'd by *Law* and *Canon*? I vviſh that all ſorts of men vvho are immediately concerned in vvhat I ſay, vvould but take this obvious Truth into their ſerious Conſideration; That as there vvere Things under the *Law*, (ſuch as the Rite of *Circumciſion*, and *Forbearing Swines Fleſh*,) vvhich (however *commanded* by *God himſelf*,) vvere not commanded for being *Good*, but vvere *Therefore* onely good, becauſe *commanded*; ſo things *Indifferent* under the *Goſpel*, though

though they are not commanded for being *Neceſſary*, do yet *become* Neceſſary by being *commanded*; and are *mediately* commanded by *God himſelf*, as far as *commanded* by *That Authority*, which *God* hath *commanded* us to *obey*. From whence it follows unavoidably, That what may *lawfully* be *done*, *before* commanded; as ſoon as *commanded*, cannot lawfully be *omitted*. For *Rebellion* againſt the *Second* Table, is as bad as *Rebellion* againſt the *Firſt*. And ſo they cannot be followers of *Peace*, or *Holineſs*, who in a meer *pretenſe* of Holineſs do *hinder* Peace. An hearty *Follower of Peace*, will *follow the *Things that make for Peace*. He will not be ſo much as a *Non-conformiſt*; but preſs with earneſtneſs after *Unity*, by *Uniformity* in the Church. And if his *Conſcience* hath any *Scruples*, ariſing meerly from the *weakneſs*, not from the *wilfulneſs* of the man, he will infinitely rather *forſake* his City, or his Country, than *ſtay* in either *to its Diſturbance*.

§ 23. Such was the pious Exhortation of *Clemens Romanus* to the *Corinthians*, which he alſo made good by his *own Example*. *Who* (ſays he) *is there among you of tender Bowels, and Generoſity? let him ſacrifice (if he is ſuch) his private Intereſt to the publick. And ſay, If*

* Rom. 14. 19.

Τίς ἐν ὑμῖν γενναῖος; τίς εὐσπλαγχνος; εἰπάτω, Εἰ δι' ἐμὲ στάσις, καὶ ἔρεις, καὶ σχίσματα, ἐκχωρῶ, ἄπειμι, ὅ ἐὰν βούλησθε, μόνον τὸ ποίμνιον τῆς χάριτος εἰρηνευέτω μετὰ τῶν καθεσταμένων πρεσβυτέρων. Clem. Rom. *ad* Corinth. Ed. Jun. p. 69.

If I am either the Author or the Fautor of any Difference, I diveſt my ſelf of All the Wealth and Honour which I injoy, and inflict upon my ſelf, a moſt gratefull Exile. Now that S. *Clemens* made good his *Exhortation* by his *Example*, I am induced to affirm from this particular Conſideration, That I can find no better way to reconcile the ſeveral Authors who will have *Clemens* to be the *Second* and the *Fourth* Biſhop of *Rome*, than by ſaying with *Epiphanius*, (till we can find a better reaſon,) That *Clemens* laid down his Biſhoprick during the Empire of *Tiberius*, and took it up again in the Time of *Nero*. The firſt of which he did *freely*, and the ſecond by *compulſion*; but Both in order to the *Unity* and *Peace* of Chriſtians. Such was alſo the publick Spirit of the renowned * *Gregory Nazianzen*, who gladly threw the *Archbiſhoprick* of *Conſtantinople* behind his Back, for the compoſing of the ſtrife that aroſe about it. *God forbid* (ſaid he *at* parting, to all the Prelates there met in the General Council,) that we vvhoſe Office 'tis to *teach* and to *bring* Peace to *others*, ſhould ſcandalouſly *break* it amongſt *our ſelves*. Rather let *Me* forſake my *Throne*, and be caſt out of the *City*, than not contribute all I can to the *publick Peace*. Ἀλύπως τὴν Ἐπισκοπὴν

Παραιτησάμην ἤρκει. —αὖθις ἀναγκασθεὶς τὴν Ἐπισκοπὴν καταχεῖν. Epiphan. *adverſ.* Carpocr. *l.* 1. Tom. 2. p. 107.

* Αἱρεῖν μὲ εἴη, καὶ παντελῶς ὄχ' ὑμῖν, εἰ τοῦ ἄλλως εἰρηνεύοντας, αὐτοὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους πόλεμον ἤρατε. εἰ δὲ πρέπειν ἐγὼ τὴν διαστάσεως αἰτίαν, ἵνα εἰμὶ σεμνότερος Ἰώνα τοῦ Προφήτου. βάλετέ με εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ πάντες ἀφ' ὑμῶν ὁ κλύδων ἡσυχάσει, &c. Gregor. *Preſbyt. in Vitâ* Nazianz. *prope finem.*

Ἐπισκοπῆς ἐξίσταμαι. βελδύεσθε, φέρετε τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὸς τὰ πεφερόμενα. ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἀγαπητὸν ἡ ἕρημία, καὶ πάλιν, καὶ νῦν. * Like to this ſpake S. *Chryſoſtom* in one of his Homilies to the People. That if *He* were thought the *Cauſe* or the *Occaſion* of their *Diviſions*, he would *recede* from his Arch-Biſhoprick, and be gon *whither they pleas'd*; vvould ſuffer *any* thing rather than *Schiſm*, which he proteſted he thought a Sin as great and damning even as *Hereſie*; and which rather than adminiſter occaſion to, he would ſtrip himſelf of the Rich and Splendid Preferment which he poſſeſs'd. A Charity like That of the Prophet *Jonas*, who for the *quieting* of the *Tempeſt*, choſe to be *caſt into the Sea*: And to preſerve a *whole Ship*, was eaſily content with a *private* Ruin. Which Example of S. *Chryſoſtom* and other Fathers more Primitive, every honeſt man will follow in theſe our *Days*, if he is *earneſtly* a follower of Peace and Holineſs. And this is one of the chiefeſt Touchſtones, whereby to difference a *weak* from a *wilfull* Brother. They who do not διώκειν τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης, *purſue with eagerneſs the Things which do make for Peace*, do not ſerve God ſolidly in the Duties of the Firſt and the Second Table, in *Piety* and *Probity*, in *Godlineſs* and *Honeſty*, in *loving God*

* Εἰ καὶ ἦν δεῖ ἡμᾶς ταῦτα ὑποπτεύειν, ἕτοιμοι φεύγειν ἐσμὲν καὶ ἀρχῆς ὅτῳ περ ἂν βέλοισθε. μόνον ἐκκλησία ἕστω μία. Chryſoſt. *in cap. 4. Epiſt. ad* Epheſ. *Homil. XI. ſub finem.*

with all their *Hearts*, which is to ſerve him in *Holineſs*, and their Neighbour as themſelves, which is to follow *Peace* with all men; and ſo they want the *two Hinges*, on which the *Door* of *Salvation* does chiefly *turn*, and whereupon does clearly hang All the *Law* and the *Prophets*.

§ 24. I cannot *follow Peace* enough, in the Diſcourſe I am upon for the following of it, till I obſerve how the *Proſperity* does moſt eſpecially depend on the *Peace* of Chriſtians; and alſo ſay by what *means*, as well as by whoſe *Inſtrumentality*, we may attain to ſo much *Peace* and *good Agreement* amongſt our ſelves, as may *redeem* ſome of the *Credit* which we cannot but have *loſt* by our foul *Diviſions*. There being no greater *Stumbling-block*, either to Thoſe that are *without*, or *within* the Church, than the *Multitude* of the *Sects* which are ſeen amongſt us. For whilſt 'tis taken by them for granted, (and alſo confeſſed by our ſelves,) that *True* Religion can be but *one*; 'tis natural for them to infer, That whereſoever there is *Truth*, there muſt be *Unity*; at leaſt in men of the ſame Profeſſion. Whereupon whilſt they obſerve, how the *Profeſſors* of *Chriſtianity* do ſtand *divided* amongſt *themſelves*, and that in point of *Opinion*, as

as well as *Practice*, they easily slide into a Jealousie, touching the *Tenor* and the *Truth* of the *whole Profession*. Now the way to make Peace, and remove the Scandal, is not to *conquer* them into orthodoxy by *dint* of Argument *alone*; (though *That* indeed is one of our fittest *Weapons*;) as well because the greater part have *not light* enough to *see* a victorious *Truth*, as because, if they have, they are not *humble* enough to *own* they have liv'd in *Errour*. No, the *hopefullest* way left, (for ought I am able to apprehend,) is *not to mention* Those Doctrines, wherein we find by Experience we always *differ*; and to *insist* on those alone, wherein we find by Experience we all *agree*. A thing which cannot be brought about by all the *Subjects put together*, but perhaps with ease enough by the *Kings* of *Christendom*; as well because they are but *few*, and therefore the fitter to *determin*, as because they are *Supreme*, and of Power to *execute*.

§ 25. For it happily falls out, through the Evidence of Truth, and the good Providence of God, That though we *differ* in *Superstructures*, yet we *agree* in the *Foundation*, and *Fundamentals* of Christianity. Which *Fundamentals*, as they are **Few*, and therefore easie to be *remember'd*,

* *Rerum absolutè necessariarum ad salutem, non magnum esse numerum, Rex Jacobus arbitratur in suâ* Responsione *ad tertiam* Observat. Perronii Cardinalis.

ber'd, ſo are they alſo very * *Plain*, and therefore eaſily *underſtood*; and that by all ſorts of People, who are not flatly Fools, or Mad-men. As the *wittieſt* or the *moſt learned* cannot need to know *more*, ſo the *moſt ſimple* and *illiterate* cannot eaſily know *leſs*, than what it is *to fear God, and to keep his Commandments*, which yet does graſp the *whole Duty* of Man as *Man*. Again, it is the whole Duty of Man as *Chriſtian*, to have a *practical Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and him Crucified*. And as the wiſeſt man living needs not know any thing *more*, ſo the moſt learned of the Apoſtles would not know any thing *elſe*. Another Summary of Religion, (as to the practical part of it, which is the main,) we have expreſs'd in Three words, both from a *Prophet*, and an *Apoſtle*. A Summary ſo *ſhort*, and yet ſo *copious*, that as a man the moſt *unskilfull* cannot eaſily know *leſs*, ſo the moſt learned and ſubtil Doctor is not bound to practiſe *more*, than *to do Juſtice, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with his God*; *or to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World*.

* *Et ferè ex æquo omnibus probantur qui ſe Chriſtianos dici poſtulant.* Id. *ibid.*

§ 26. Now if 'tis granted and agreed by every Sort of Real Chriſtians, That the *Creed* and the *Commandments* are comprehenſive of the *All* that is *Fundamental*, or *of Neceſſity* in Religion,

ligion, for *Faith*, and *Practice*; and if All *under* Authority will but allow it to be the privilege of such as are placed *in* Authority, to judge of the *Decency* and the *Order* which S. *Paul* in the general, and every Nation in particular thinks it a duty to observe in the *publick Worship*; (to wit, the *Place*, and the *Time*, and the *Manner* of its performance, which being but *Accidents*, or *Adjuncts*, or *Externals* of Religion, should not be differ'd about by *Them* who fully agree in its *Essentials*;) It will be difficult to imagin, how the *Divisions* and *Separations* which are so *many*, and so *wide* as we see they are, can be able to escape a most happy *Closure*. A thing which the *Preachers* can but *press*, and the best of the *People* can but *pray for*, but the *Rulers* of the Earth can easily bring into *Effect* too, if their *Endeavours* shall be as *hearty*, as their *Authority* is *divine*, and their *Power cogent*. Which how can they possibly imploy unto a better end or use, than is the *binding up* the *Wounds* of a *bleeding Saviour*, who owns himself to be the *Head* of That *mangl'd Body*, whereof the greatest men on Earth are but lofty *Members*? Now the better to prevail with men of all Ranks, both with Them who are *in Authority*, and with Them who live *un-*

der it, I would preſent but *Two things* to their reſpective Conſiderations; Firſt, That they who are in *Authority* ought not to urge the *Accidentals* and *Externals* in Religion, with as much vehemence as they do the *Eſſentials* of it; nor * create *too many* Neceſſities in the uſe of things Indifferent, where God himſelf has created *none*. Next, That the people *under* Authority ought not to leſſen their Obedience to God *in* Man, by ſtill pretending their obligation of obeying God *rather* than Man. An Axiom *True* indeed at *all* Times, but yet at *thoſe* times *impertinent*, and urged quite *out of Seaſon*, when God does *chooſe* to be obey'd by our obedience to his Vicegerents. Who, if they have *any right at all* to make poſitive Laws, muſt inevitably make them of Things *Indifferent*.

* *Eccleſia Romana multa hodie obſervat ceu ἀπλῶς neceſſaria, quæ vetus Eccleſia vix nôrat, certè non ita uſurpabat, tanquam planè eſſent Neceſſaria.* Iſ. Caſaub. *Epiſt.* 710. *p.* 912.

§ 27. I preſs the former conſideration, with due ſubmiſſion to Authority, and in behalf, (not of *wilfull*, but) of *truly-weak* Brethren, becauſe I conceive the Laws of Men can reach no farther than the Objects of *outward Senſe*; and therefore cannot puniſh *Avarice*, *Pride*, or *Malice*, though they can and do *Invaſion*, *Theft*, and *Murther*; Nor wrong *Opinions* in Religion, whilſt they quietly lye *ſleeping*, or diſturb nothing more than their Owner's *Minds*; but onely

onely as breaking forth of their *Mouths*, and at last running out at their *fingers ends*. I know the Sword is apt to *terrifie*, but not *instruct*; to change a Sectary's *Confession*, but not his *Creed*; and therefore the Maladies of the *Spirit* are to be *Spiritually* dealt with, to work *their* Cure. Not by the *Gibbet*, or the *Jayl*, but by the force of sound Doctrine, and argumentative Conversation. A man who wanders out of his way for want of *light* onely, and not *Sobriety*, (overtaken, not with Drink, but with the Darkness of the Night,) deserves a *Lantern* for his Direction, a great deal rather than a *Rod*. He would be thought a strange Organist who should not scruple to *break* his Pipes as oft as he finds them *out of Tune*. Nor could our Magistrates think kindly of God himself, should he *recall* them with a *Thunderbolt*, as fast as he sees them going *astray*.

§ 28. And as for such reasons as These I press the *First* Consideration, so I discern as great reasons, (and such as make as much for Peace) to resume the *Second*. For though *Ceremonies* and *Rites* are onely *Accidents* in Religion, yet *Obedience* to *Authority* cannot but pass for an *Essential*. Because whatever God commands us by his *Moses* and his *Aaron*, his *Zerub-*

Zerubbabel and his *Jeſhua*, his anointed Lieutenants, both *King* and *Prieſt*, he does as *really* and as *truly*, and as *authoritatively* command us, as what he commands us by a *Voice*, or an *Hand* from *Heaven*. And ſeeing the ſame God that ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not worſhip a Graven Image*, does alſo ſay at the ſame time, as well as in the ſame Decalogue, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, (whether private or publick, Eccleſiaſtical, or Civil,) It is by conſequence as *Immediate* a Sin againſt God, to ſhew a *contempt* of That Authority which God hath *commanded* us to *obey*, as 'tis *to worſhip a graven Image*, or *to take God's Name in vain*.

§ 29. Now might I ſpeak without Cenſure, even by ſpeaking with ſubmiſſion to all Superiours, (as well as to others of more Reſearch and better Diſcretion than my ſelf,) I would adventure to affirm it as the Concluſion of the whole matter, That when Peace cannot be had by ſuch a *reciprocal Self-denial* as I have now pleaded for, in Them that are veſted *with* Authority, and in Them that live *under* it; by *Compaſſion* in the former, and by *Compliance* in the later; by *Condeſcenſion* in the one, and by *Submiſſion* in the other; but each will have his *whole Will*, and not admit of a *Compoſition*; nothing

nothing but *Power Irreſiſtible* can ſuccour ſuch as *make* Laws, againſt the Violence and Incurſions of ſuch as are ſtouter than to *Obey* them. Nor will a wiſe man expect to have *protection* under the *Laws* and the *Makers* of them, any longer than they *Both* ſhall be ſo *protected.*

The Application.

§ 30. But I return to that Point, from which I have made a very *pertinent*, becauſe a *profitable* Digreſſion; nor yet a *Digreſſion* from my *Text*, but from the Thread of my Diſcourſe touching the *Nature*, and the *Neceſſity* of *Peace* and *Holineſs*. Which being both of ſuch Importance, as that our *Happineſs* does depend upon the *earneſtneſs* of our *Purſuit*, How can we chooſe but be perſwaded to do a thing which is ſo *Natural*, as that a man would think it ſhould be *hard not to do it?* For find we any thing more *Natural*, than to be *Lovers of our ſelves*, and ſo to *covet* thoſe things which we believe to be the moſt for our *own Advantage?* A little Rhetorick (one would think) ſhould be ſufficient to perſwade us to *chooſe* our *Intereſt*, and ſo to *follow* even with *earneſtneſs* the neceſſary *means* of our being *Happy*. Be we never ſo *illiterate*, or be we never ſo *perverſe*, yet through the little which hath been ſpoken of *Peace* and

Holineſs, (whether as ſeparate, or in conjunction,) we cannot be *ignorant* of their *Nature*, or unconvinc'd of their *Neceſſity*.

§ 31. If then in reſpect of their Common *Nature*, They are as 'twere the *two Armes*, which do *imbrace* the whole *Decalogue* or Ten Commandments of the Law; we muſt never flatter our ſelves that we are Chriſtians *good enough*, until we find our *Obedience* to be *impartial*; that is, as well to the *firſt* as to the *ſecond* Table, and no leſs to the *ſecond* than to the *firſt*. Nor may we ever give our ſelves *Reſt*, until we See we have attain'd to this Comparative *perfection*; I mean a *ſingleneſs* of *Heart*, and a love of obedience without reſerve. Our *reſpect* (like that of the *Pſalmiſt*) muſt be to *All God's Commandments*, and we muſt ſtudy to live a peaceable and quiet life in *All* Godlineſs and Honeſty, (1 *Tim.*2.2.) We muſt not be *kinder* or *more indulgent* to *one* Commandment than to *another*, (whether *byaſs'd* by *Cuſtom*, or *Education*;) but rather keep our ſelves in *Awe* by chewing on *That* of the Apoſtle, *Whoſoever offends in one point is guilty of All.* Jam.2.10.

Thus we muſt argue from the *Nature* of Peace and Holineſs. And, after a manner not unlike, we ought to argue from their *Neceſſity*.

For

For if in respect of their *Necessity*, they are as 'twere the *two Hinges*, upon which the very *Door* of Salvation *turns*; or (if you please) the *Two Wings* (as S. **Bernard* calls them) wherewith the *Soul* of a Christian *soar's* up to Heaven; Lord! how nearly does it concern us, to *follow* them both as is here requir'd? and *to pass the* whole *Time of our sojourning here in fear? What manner of men ought we to be* in the future Course of our Conversation? To follow Holiness and Peace, concerns us as much as *Salvation* comes to; that is, as much as our *Souls* are *Worth*. Fail of *these* if we *dare*, unless we are so *stout*, that we *dare* be *damn'd*. But yet how many of our *Fiduciaries* do *miss* of heaven, meerly by thinking they *cannot* miss it? because (forsooth) to the *Regenerate* 'tis a Thing perfectly *unavoidable*? And what numbers of *Solifidians* do make it *difficult* to be *sav'd*, by making it *easier* than God will have it? by thinking Salvation is to be had at a *cheaper Rate*, than that of *following Peace and Holiness?* Now can there be any thing more *adviseable*, than that other mens *mischiefs* should keep us *safe?* and we receive the *whole benefit* without the *least danger* of their unhappiness? Mark well the *reason* which here is urg'd for

* Bernard *in Serm.* 4. *de Oratione & Jejunio. p.* 113.

the fixing of the *Act* on the *double Object*. (I ſhall but paraphraſe the Text in a broader Engliſh,) *Follow Peace and Holineſs*, if for no *other* reaſon, at leaſt for *This*, becauſe ye are *happy*, if ye *doe*; and *damn'd for ever*, if ye do *not*.

Leſs than This we muſt not *preach*, and *more* than this we need not *learn*.

But if This of it ſelf cannot find ſufficient Place in our Conſideration, yet if we have any the leaſt reſpect to our *Secular Intereſt* and *Advantage*, as we deſire to be free from the *Charge* and *Coſtlineſs* of Sin, and to *thrive* by God's Bleſſing *upon* All we ſet our hearts and our hands unto; or if we have any the leaſt reſpect to our own *good Name*, and *Reputation*, as we deſire to leave behind us a *fair Report*, and to be honourably mention'd by them that dwell round about us; or if we have any the leaſt reſpect to our inward *Quiet* and *Tranquillity*, as we deſire to have the *Peace* of a *cleanſed Conſcience*, which is in *Solomon*'s Accompt a *Continual Feaſt*; or if all theſe together cannot ingage our Reſolutions, yet if to theſe we add That which before was hinted, If we have any the leaſt reſpect to the *Righteous Judge of all the World*; as we deſire to *eſcape from the Wrath*

Wrath to come, and to *enter* with an *Euge*, *into the Joy of our Lord*, Let us *think of these Things* when the Sermon's ended.

And the God of *Peace* and *Holineſs* ſanctifie us throughly; That the *whole* of every one of us, both *Body*, *Soul*, and *Spirit*, *may be kept blameleſs unto the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

To Him be Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

OF ABSTAINING FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL.

1 THESS. 5. 22.

Abstain from all Appearance of evil.

§ 1. IT was the Fancy of a wise, and an honest Heathen, that all a rational man's Duty might be expres'd in two words, ἀνέχου, καὶ ἀπέχου, *Bear*, and *Forbear*; the *first* implying *Patience* under the *evil* of *Affliction*, the *second Abstinence* from the *evil* of *Sin*. Now in this Precept of our Apostle, we have one of the two *Hinges*, on which does *hang* the *whole Duty* of

of *man* as *man*. For whatſoever is a man's *Duty* may be referr'd to two *Heads*, His *Abſtaining from evil*, and his *doing that which is Good*. Nay foraſmuch as 'tis impoſſible to abſtain from *all* evil and from *all Appearance* of it, without the *doing* of what is *Good*, and *perſevering* unto the *end* too; (becauſe the *want* of Perſeverance is Simply *evil*, and cannot ſtand with that *Abſtinence* which is from *all* the very *face* or *Appearance* of it,) I ſhall not ſure be *too profuſe* in Speaking the *pithineſs* of my Text, if I ſhall ſay 'tis *comprehenſive* of the *whole Duty* of a *Chriſtian*. For if we abſtain from *unbelief* and *misbelief* of *Chriſt*'s *Goſpel*, and from all *diſobedience* to *Chriſt*'s *commands*, and from the *ſcandalous Appearance* both of the *one* and of the *other*; we do but barely do *as much* as my *Text* requires, and the *God* whom we ſerve can exact *no more*.

§ 2. In the Diſcuſſion of the Words, there are Theſe things to be conſider'd.

Firſt, The *Nature* of the *Act*, which is very *Good*; it is ἀπέχεσθε, *Abſtain*. Next, the *Quality* of the *Object*, and that is *evil*; it is ἀπὸ πονηροῦ, *Abſtain from evil*. Thirdly, the very great *extent* both of the *Act* and of the *Object*; it is ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ παντὸς, abſtain from *all* evil. And then

then becauſe the word εἶδος is of a *double* ſignification, importing equally the *Species*, and the *Appearance* of any Object, here is therefore requir'd a *double Abſtinence*; one from all the *kinds* of evil, and another from all the *occaſions* of it. *That* is required as the *End*, and *This* as the *Medium* conducing to it. We muſt abſtain from the *Occaſions* and *Opportunities* of evil, that ſo we may be the better *able* to abſtain from the *Species* and *Preſence* of it.

But firſt of all to the end that our very *Abſtinence* may not be *Evil*, even then when it makes the moſt *goodly ſhew*; we muſt *abſtain* from the *evil* of *ſeeming onely* to be *abſtemious*; that is to ſay, from the *evil*, of being *abſtemious* in *Hypocriſie*. For the World is too full of thoſe *Modern Phariſees*, who often *violate* the Text by its *Authority*; and ſo inſiſt upon the *Letter*, in oppoſition to the *Scope*, and the *Tenor* of it, that they *rebell* againſt the *Precept* by their *obedience*; and offer violence to the *Law* in its own *defence*. For (ſay They within themſelves) it is not ſaid by the Apoſtle, Abſtain from all Evil, but from all *Appearance* of it; as if he meant not ſo much to forbid the *Sin*, as the *Scandalous manner* of its *commiſſion*. As if he had thought with Them of *Sparta*, That the *abo-*

minable Thing is not to *ſteal*, but to be *caught*; not the *Irregularity*, but *Notoriety* of the Fact. And as if *This* were either the *whole*, or the *prime* Importance of the Text, you ſhall have many *So* abſtain from *all Appearance* of evil, as to ſatisfie themſelves in the *Injoyment* of the *evil*, becauſe they abſtain from the *bare Appearance*.

§ 2. Thus the *Adultereſs* in the *Proverbs* may be ſaid to have abſtain'd from the *Appearance* of evil, becauſe *ſhe wiped her Mouth*, and look'd demurely, and ſaid that *She had done no wickedneſs*. (*Prov.*30.20.) What was wanting to her in *chaſtity*, She endeavour'd to ſupply by the *care* and *caution* wherewith She ſin'd. As if the *Rule* were to be taken in this Senſe alſo, *De non apparentibus & non exiſtentibus eadem eſt ratio*. I have *done no wickedneſs*, becauſe it *does not appear* that I have done it. My way of Sin has been as *cloſe*, and as *indiſcernable*, as *the way of an Eagle in the Air*, or the *way of a Ship in the midſt of the Sea*. (v.19.) And if there is either no God at all, or elſe a God that hath no *omniſcience*, or that doth not *imploy* it on trivial objects, I have abſtained from *all evil*, becauſe from all *Appearance* of it.

Thus the *Phariſees of old* may be ſaid to have *abſtain'd*

abſtain'd from the *Appearance* of evil, becauſe however they were guilty of eating up *Orphans and Widows houſes*, yet they did it ſo devoutly, by their *faſting twice a week*, and their *long Prayers for a pretenſe*, that notwithſtanding they were *vile* in the ſight of *God*, our Saviour tells us, *they appear'd Righteous unto men.* And how was that, but by *abſtaining* from the *Appearance* at leaſt of all *unrighteouſneſs?* They did *Noctem peccatis, & Fraudibus addere Nubem*; that is, they Sinn'd *out of ſight* as much as might be; They were *circumſpect* and *wary* in all their wickedneſs. If any *covetouſneſs* or *cruelty* of more than ordinary ſize was to be committed, they preſently cover'd it with a *Corban*, and were Deceivers of *men* in the *name* of *God.* Matth. 23. 28.

Thus the *Samaritans* heretofore may be ſaid to have *abſtain'd* from the *Appearance* of evil; becauſe how *ſinfull* ſoever they were *Themſelves*, they did yet make a *Conſcience* of coming near unto a *Sinner.* Every *Jew* was thought ſick of a *noli me tangere*, and was accordingly kept off with a *Ne attingas. Stand by thy ſelf, come not near to me, for I am holier than Thou*, (*Iſa.* 65. 2, 3, 5.)

And thus the rigideſt * Profeſſors of Grace

* Πρέπειν ὄχι μὴ μόνον καλεῖσθαι χριστιανὸς, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἶναι. ὃ γὰρ τὸ λέγεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶναι μαχάριον ποιεῖ. Ignat. *in Ep. ad* Magneſios.

and Godlineſs here at home, have a *Conſcience* ſo *callous*, as to ſuffer them to *rebell* againſt their Governours; but yet ſo *delicate*, as not to permit them to *obey*. A Conſcience ſo *wide*, as to *ſwallow Camels*; but yet ſo *ſtreight*, as to *ſtrein at Gnats*. A Conſcience ſo *tough*, as to bear a *Schiſm*; and yet ſo *tender*, as to ſcruple at a *Ceremony*. They are not *Sabbath-breakers*, or *Swearers*, (for thoſe are Sins of *no Profit*,) nor are they ordinarily *drunk* with *exceſs of Wine*; (for *That* is both a *diſgracefull* and *coſtly* ſin;) but they are *Serious* and *Demure* in all their projects, and ſeek the *ruin* of a *Church* in as great *Sobriety*, * as *Julius Cæſar* did that of a *Commonwealth*; Thus affecting to *abſtain* from *all Appearance of evil*, when they have *nothing* in them of *Good*, but in *Appearance*. Inſomuch as I may ſay, without breach of Charity, that ſince the **word* Godlineſs was *uſurp'd* to ſupplant the *Thing*, a greater Improvement hath been made in the Trade of *Knavery* and *Deceipt*, than had been ever known before in any leſs pretending Times.

§ 4. This muſt therefore be the Subject of our *firſt* and *chief care*, that we abuſe not *our ſelves*, as well as *others*, by taking That to be *Holineſs*, which is *Hypocriſie*; That we *abſtain* in

* M. Catonis *verbum eſt, ad evertendam Remp. ſobrium acceſſiſſe.* Sueton.

* *Atrocius ſub ſancti nominis Profeſſione peccatur.* Salv. *de* Providen. *c* 7. *Magis damnabilis eſt malitia, quam Titulus bonitatis accuſat; & reatus impii eſt pium Nomen.* Id. *c.* 11.

in ſincerity from the *Evil it ſelf*, and not from the *Sole Appearance* of it.

Our *Second* care muſt be, that in the courſe of our *Abſtinence*, we be not onely *Sincere*, but *Impartial* too. 'Tis not enough that we abſtain from *This* or *That ſingle* evil, to which perhaps we are not carried by any *natural Inclination*, or have contracted *Averſeneſs* to; For it follows in the Text, ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ παντὸς, abſtain from *All* evil.

Our *Third* care muſt be, that in the management of our Abſtinence, we be *wiſe* and *prudent*, as well as impartial and ſincere. Which is not onely a very *laudable*, but (in one reſpect at leaſt) a very *needfull* Qualification. For we know 'tis very *needfull* that we be *innocent as Doves*; which we can very hardly be, unleſs we be *wiſe alſo as Serpents*. I mean ſo *wiſe* as to *abſtain* from thoſe *Indifferent* ſorts of *Good*, which are *Incentives*, and *Occaſions*, and *Introductories* to *evil*. This we learn from the word εἶδος, as here 'tis taken by our Tranſlators in its *ſecond* ſignification. Abſtain not onely from *all the Sorts*, but (over and above) from *all the Appearances* of evil. Not onely from the kinds, but *Occaſions* of it. And theſe I intend ſhall be the Boundaries of my following Diſcourſe.

§ 5. To ſhew the *Goodneſs* and the *Neceſſity* of the *firſt* particular of the *Three*, to wit, our *Abſtaining from* what is *evil*, I cannot better take my *Riſe* then from this pertinent obſervation; That even *Abſtinence in it ſelf* is a conſiderable Vertue, although it be onely from *Things Indifferent*, although it be but from Things, whereof we are permitted a free Injoyment. *Auguſtus Cæſar* in *Suetonius*, the Emperour *Tacitus* in *Vopiſcus*, the *Phliaſii* in *Xenophon*, and the *Abſtemii* in *Athenæus*, have been deſervedly applauded for this one reaſon. And as the *Rechabites* were commended by God Himſelf, for not departing from the *Will* of their Father *Jonadab*; ſo was it *Jonadab*'s commendation, that he *commanded his Sons to abſtain from Wine*, not at all for being *evil*, but rather *dangerouſly good*. Now that *Abſtinence* is *good*, although it is not from things which are ſimply *Evil*, ſeems to be evident even from This (if from no other) reaſon, that it *enables* and *prepares* us for the great Duty of *Self-denial*. It is a *practice* of that *Dominion* we ought to have over *our ſelves*; a prudent *Exerciſe* of the *Victory* which both our *Reaſons* and our *Wills* ſhould ſtill obtain over our *Appetites*. For by *denying* unto our ſelves ſome things

Suetон. *l* 2. *c*.72,73,77. Vopiſc. *in vitâ* Taciti *Imper*. *p*. 414. Xenophon *in* ἑλλω. *lib*. 5. *p*. 441. Athenæus *l*. 2 *c* 6. *etiam l*. 1. *c*. 8. Valer. Max. *l*. 4. *c*. 3.

Jer. 35. 14.

Hoc Sancti viri habent proprium, quòd ut ſemper ab illicitis longè ſint, à ſe plerumque etiam licita abſcindunt. Greg. Mag. *Dial*. *l*. 4. *c*. 11.

things *lawfull* and *allow'd*, we may attain to a *facility* of abſtaining from the things that are moſt *forbidden*.

§ 6. And this alone would be enough, in caſe there were not (as there are) any other reaſons, why *The Church* and *State* too præſcribe the *Abſtinences* of *Lent*. For as the annual obſervation of *Lent* it ſelf is (in the Judgment of S. *Jerom*) of Apoſtical Inſtitution; ſo are its *Abſtinences* from *Fleſh* (though a thing *Indifferent*) no leſs injoyned in a *Religious* than in a *Civil* Conſideration, if together with the *Quality* and *Condition* of our Meals, we have regard unto the *Temper* and *Meaſure* of them. Nay by the help of a Diſtinction, our ſingle *Abſtinence* from the *Quality* may be in *both* conſiderations. For what Authority does *command* upon a *civil* Accompt onely, the People certainly muſt *obey* upon the Accompt of their *Religion*, if they do regulate their Religion by the *expreſs Word of God*, which ſtreightly chargeth them to *ſubmit to every Ordinance of Man*. (Meaning the *Ordinances of Man*, which are not *oppoſite* or *croſs* to the *Laws* of *God*.) To abſtract our *Abſtinence* from our *obligedneſs* to *obey*, (and from the other great End which firſt I mention'd,) is to abſtract at the ſame

ſame inſtant the merit of *vertue* from our *Abſtinence*. For *Meat commendeth us not to God*, (as ſaith S. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*; and *every Creature of God is good, if received with Thanksgiving*, (ſaith He to *Timothy*:) And though the *preference* of *Fiſh* before the *Meat* of the *Shambles*, is ſo far *innocent*, and *lawfull*, as 'tis left to our *Chriſtian Liberty*; yea ſo far *neceſſary*, and *binding*, as 'tis *commanded* by that *Authority* which God hath *commanded* us to *obey*; yet, *abſtracted* from the *Precept* of ſuch Authority, it may be *Wantonneſs* in *one*, and in *another*, *Superſtition*. For Meats are all of ſuch *Indifference*, if *antecedently* conſider'd, and with the *œconomy* of the *Goſpel*, that as, *if we* *eat *Fleſh*, *we are not the better*, ſo *if we eat none*, *we are not the worſe*. Nay a man, by eating *Fiſh*, may make *proviſion* for the *Fleſh*; eſpecially when he makes it to *ſwim* in *Wine*. He may by Both ſo *fill* his *Belly*, and ſo *fulfill* his *Appetite*, as that his *Abſtinence* from *Fleſh* may but conduce to his *ſenſuality*; and all his *Lenten entertainment* prove but a *ſacrifice* to his *Luſt*. The moſt voluptuous [a]*Apolauſticks*, in the Accompt of *Athenæus*, became infamous for nothing more, than their paſſionate *Doatages* upon *Fiſh*. Nor could the very

1 Cor. 8. 8.

1 Tim. 4. 4.

Sunt deinde Media, quæ quidem nec bona eſſe noſcuntur, nec mala, poſſunt tamen indifferenter & benè pariter & malè vel prohiberi, vel juberi, ſed malè nullatenus in his à Subditis obediri. Bernard. *in Epiſt. 7. ad* Adam Monachum. *p. 1394.*

Ex his ſunt, jejunare, vigilare, legere, &c. Idem ibidem.

* 1 Cor 8. 8.

[a] De Philoxeno Cytherio, Apicio, *aliiſque, conſule* Athenæum, *l. 1. c. 6.*

very learned **Cook*, in the old *Comœdian*, provide the Amorous young men a more ſtrong *Incentive*. From whence it follows that to keep *Lent*, as 'tis a Time of Mortification, is not ſo carefully to *abſtain* from the *Kind* and *Quality* of our Meals, as from the over-great *Richneſs* and *Fulneſs* of them. So that the due keeping of *Lent*, in point of eating and drinking, conſiſteth wholly or chiefly in theſe two Things; to wit, our *Abſtinence* from the *kind*, which is forbid by *Man*'s Law; and our *Abſtinence* from the *meaſure*, which is forbidden alſo by *God*'s. Each of Theſe is a *Duty*, however *different* they are in *degree* of *Merit*. For that the *later* is the *greateſt*, and moſt important, may appear by the great *Difference* betwixt the *reaſons* of the goodneſs which lies in *Both*. For our *Abſtinence* from *Fleſh*, is onely *good* becauſe *commanded*; whereas our *Abſtinence* from *evil*, is onely *commanded* becauſe 'tis *good*. There the goodneſs is *accidental*, but here 'tis *natural*. There 'tis nothing but the *Conſequent*, here the *Cauſe* of the Commandment. *There* 'tis capable of *ceaſing* by *Diſpenſations* even from *Men*; whereas *here* the matter of it is *indiſpenſable* even by *God*.

§ 7. This muſt therefore be our firſt and

* ---μειρά-κιον ἐρωμέ-νῳ ἔχον ἢ παῤῥῶν᾽ ὐσίαν κατεδηδ. τούτῳ παρέ-θηκα σηπίας ᾗ τᾠθίδας ᾗ ἧς πε-τραίων ἰχθύ-ων ἧς πτι-κίλων ἐν-βεγμαπίοις γλαφυροῖσι κεχρημη-μένα. Anthippus Comicus *apud* Athenæum, *l.* 9. *c.* 15. *p.* 404.

our greateſt Care, that we *abſtain* from thoſe things that are *ſimply evil*; and this in a *double Oppoſition* to *two ſorts* of men, who divide a great part of the world between them; ſuch as are *Hypocrites* on the *Right* hand, and *Antihypocrites* on the *Left*.

Touching the former of the two I ſhall ſay the leſs, the more I have ſpoken of them before, in my Introduction. Adding onely that They *abſtain* from the *Appearance* of evil, as *broken Tradeſmen* from the *ſemblance* of perfect *Beggary*. The *nearer* they are to the State of *Bankrupts*, they have their Artifices and Tricks whereby to ſeem ſo much the *Richer*. Or as *Antipater* had his *outſide* all clad in *Black*, not becauſe (as he pretended) it was the old *Macedonian habit*, but to *conceal* his whole *Inſide*, as *lin'd* with *Purple*. We muſt not therefore follow *Them*, who *cry aloud* againſt the Sins they imbrace in *ſilence*, and *abſtain* in ſuch wiſe from *all Appearance* of *evil*, as to abſtain from *no evil* but *in Appearance*. We muſt not *ſo* apprehend or miſtake the Text, as if 'twere meant by S. *Paul* for an *Exhortative* to *Hypocriſie*; not ſo properly to abſtain from the *Evil it ſelf*, as from the *ſhew*, and *ſhadow* of it. No, the Text is to be held by a ſafer Handle; and our

Εἰ τὸ μὲν ὄνομά πις τὸ χειρὸν ὑπο δύοιτο, ὅσα δὲ τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ σωφρονεῖ, μὴ δεικνύοι τῷ βίῳ, καταφανὲς ἦ τὸ ὀνόματος ὁ πιθανὸν, καὶ τὸ ἀφελὲς ἡμῖν ὑπόδειγμα, ἀφεσωπεῖον ἀνύχον, ἀνδρωπίνῳ χαρακτῆρι μεμορφωμένον, ἀδειδὲς τὸ πιθανὸν. Gregor. Nyſſen. *de Profeſſ. Chriſt.*

our Argument is to run thus, *à minori ad majus.* If 'tis our Duty to abstain from all *Appearance* of Evil, how much *more* is it our Duty, to abstain from *all evil?* The *former* Abstinence is a *Vertue*, whensoever this *later* does either *attend*, or *go before* it; whereas for want of this *later*, the *former* Abstinence is a *Sin.*

§ 8. Yet not so great a Sin as *Theirs*, who in *avoidance* of *Hypocrisie*, do boldly rush into the *greater*, and *worse* extreme. Who being *asham'd* of seeming *piously* and *religiously* addicted, (as a thing not becoming their *Youth*, or *Quality*,) do therefore *proclaim* their Sin as *Sodom*, and commit it (with *Absolon*) *on the House* Top. Not onely *abstaining* from *all* that's *good*, but from *all Appearance* of it. As if to be thought a godly man, were the greatest unhappiness in the World, and therefore to be shun'd with the greatest Care. I shall exemplify what I say but in Three particulars. First, how many may we observe who easily enter into *Duels*, (and are asham'd *not* to do so) with such as speak to the *Dishonour* of a most despicable *Mistriss*, and yet will stand *unconcern'd*, when more is done to the *Reproach* of their *Master Christ?* Men so *stout*, that they *dare* be *damn'd*; and yet so eminent for their *cowar-*

Isa. 3. 9.

2 Sam. 16. 22.

dize, that they *dare not* be *patient* of *putting up* the leaſt *wrong*. Men of ſuch *poor* and ſuch *ſordid* Spirits, as to *dread* the very *thoughts* and the *words* of *Men*, however *ſenſeleſs* of the *hatred* and *wrath* of *God*. Men of ſuch ſtrange *Puſillanimity*, that they *dare not* indure the *Contempt* of this World, which *God himſelf* is *contemn'd* by, and yet is *ſilent*. A downright *ſpeculative Atheiſt*, who *denies* and *derides* the God that made him, or a *practical Atheiſt* who dares do *both* in his *Converſation*, may walk the ſtreets very ſecurely without a weapon; has never a *challenge* ſent to him for having *affronted* the *Lord* of *Glory*; who yet for any the *leaſt affront* which he ſhould *dare* to have done to an *handſom Idol*, had ſtraight been *ſummon'd* into the *Field*, there to make ſatisfaction in *Tears of Blood*. Again, how many in our *Proteſtant Reformed* World, do ſeem to take as great a *Pride*, and make as open a *Profeſſion* of being *eminent Apolauſticks*, as that *voluptuous* ſort of *Heathens*, whom *Eubulus* the Greek Comœdian does *expoſe* upon the *Stage* for their *learned Surfeits*? who *laugh* at *Abſtinence* as a *Foolery*; and look on all *Self denial* as arrant *Madneſs*. (A thing proceeding from nothing better than the *diſtemper'd Hypochondres*.) Who having learn'd

Eubulus *in* Amalthæâ *introducit* Herculem *Delitiarum vituperatorem v.* If. Cauſab. *in* Athen. *l.* 2. *c.* 23.

learn'd the deep *Science* of *Eating well*, and being able to make a *Treatment* as becomes *Criticks* in *Sensuality*, are apt to put a *greater* value both on *Themselves*, and their *Atchievement*, than if they had *taken the Town of Troy*.

* Τᾶτ' ἐγὼ ἐκάσῳ μεῖζον ἢ Τροίαν ἑλεῖν.

* Euripid. *in* Andromachâ *Menelaum introducit sic loquentem.*

Lastly, how many *Antihypocrites*, although *Professors* of *Christianity*, do vye with *Ovid*, and *Messalina*, the Emperour *Proculus*, and the rest of that heathen World, (for the recording of whose effronteries *Cornelius Agrippa* is to be blam'd,) in that they do not onely *disclose* the *real* Enormities which they have done, but also *boast* of *more Debauches*, than they ever had the *appetite*, or possibly the *strength* to be guilty of? Now he who *so* far hates *hypocrisie*, (which is a damnable abstaining from *appearance* onely all of *Evil*,) as to *glory* in his *Impieties*, and by consequence to abstain from the very *appearance* also of *good*, (whereby he does not onely *displease*, but *despise* his Maker,) is *as one flying from a Lion, when behold a Bear meets him*; *or as one leaning upon the Wall, and a Serpent bites him.* (*Amos* 5.19.) He is as one fallen, out of a *Feaver* into a *Fire*; and to be reckon'd, of the two, *the more horrid Devil.*

Cornelius Agrippa *de vanit. scient. cap.* 63.

§ 9. In opposition to the *first* of the two Ex-

tremes, we muſt make our *firſt* ſtep to raiſe us Thus unto a *Second*. If Abſtinence is ſo noble and ſo neceſſary a Duty, though from Thoſe very things which are but *dangerouſly Good*, what then is Abſtinence from the objects which are *damnably Evil?* To keep our ſelves far enough from Such, we muſt carefully ſet before us King *David*'s *Method*; when being to qualifie himſelf for an Approach to God's *Altar*, he did not ſay *he would waſh his Face*, but his *Hands in Innocence*. Beſides it ought to be conſider'd that *all* the *Commandments*, ſaving *two*, having been *negatively* propos'd, imply the *Bottom* of all our Duties to lie in our *Abſtinence from evil*. As being That, without which, even all our *good Deeds* will be *done in vain*; yea and the *beſt* of all our Works will be but handſome *Abominations*. For the *higheſt* and the moſt *poſitive* of all our Duties, are comprehended by S. *Paul* under theſe three Heads, our *living ſoberly*, *righteouſly*, *and godly in this preſent World*, *Tit.* 2. 12. But 'tis abſolutely *impoſſible* that we ſhould ever live *ſoberly*, unleſs by *abſtaining* from *all Exceſs*; that we ſhould ever live *righteouſly*, unleſs by *abſtaining* from *all Injuſtice*; that we ſhould ever live *godly*, unleſs by *abſtaining* from *all Prophaneneſs*. It is

is a vain thing for *any*, to think of *loving* and *ſerving God*, who does not firſt of all *ceaſe* to *injure* his *Neighbour* and *Himſelf* too. *Virtus eſt, vitium fugere*; The very *firſt* of all *Virtues* is a man's *Abſtinence* from *Vice*; *& ſapientia prima eſt, Stultitiâ caruiſſe.*——— *The fear of the Lord, That is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding. Job.*28,28.

§ 10. But however this is *neceſſary*, 'tis *not enough*, ſince we are far from being ſure that this our *Abſtinence* is *ſincere*, unleſs by its being *impartial* too. For ſome of the *worſt* of mankind may ſtill *abſtain* from *ſome* evils, although it be but by the means of ſome *occaſional Averſeneſs*, and poſſibly too for *want* of a *natural Inclination*. 'Tis very far from being enough, that we have *Tolerance* in *one* kind, or *Continence* in *another*, which in *Ariſtotle*'s Judgment are but a couple of *Semivertues*, (and yet 'twere well if moſt Chriſtians would now attain to ſo good a Pitch;) no, nor is it quite enough that we have *Temperance* in them *Both*, however *This* is a *complete* and a *perfect* vertue. For this is onely to *abſtain* from thoſe *groſſer Evils*, which do affect either the *Touch* or the *Taſt* with Pleaſure. That is to ſay, with *ſuch* Pleaſure, as is æqually *common* to *Men* with *Brutes*. No, when

when our *Parents* were firſt commanded to *abſtain* from *That Tree*, which was *inclos'd* by God's *Precept* in the midſt of the Garden, they were *implicitly* commanded to abſtain from *all evil.* In as much as *all* the *Branches* of Sin and Wickedneſs, which from that time to this have *defil'd* our Nature, do owe their curſed *Derivation* to that *one Stock*. And by conſequence it concerns us to advance a ſtep farther; to plead and pant after, and contend for *ſuch* an Abſtinence, as is not onely from *This* or *That*, (for then the very worſt of us might ſoon be Chriſtians good enough,) but from All ſorts of evil without exception; and ſo to comply with our Apoſtle in his important monoſyllable, by taking the *object* of our Abſtinence with its unlimited *univerſality.* For (that we may paſs from the firſt to the ſecond Particular in the Text) it is

Ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ Παντὸς—

Abſtain from *All* evil.

§ 11. I ſay from *All*, for theſe *obvious*, but *uſefull* Reaſons, which I ſhall not onely *propoſe*, but humbly *ſubmit* to conſideration. Firſt, becauſe *He* who is indulgent to any *one* ſort of Evil, cannot ſay that there is *one* from which he does *vertuouſly abſtain*; nor is he certain what *duration*

duration his *partial Abſtinence* will be of. It being ſo eaſie for him to fall from *one wickedneſs to another*, that whereſoever the cunning *Serpent* gets in his *Head*, he draws his *whole Body* in with the greater Eaſe. As if the *contagion* that is in *Vice* were in proportion to the Links in the *Chain* of *Virtue*, our *Indulgency* to *one* is apt to *draw* the *reſt* after. One rotten Action does as gladly *infect* another, as one *putrid Grape* does communicate its venom to *all* the *Cluſter*. And the reaſon is very clear, why He who gives himſelf the Liberty to feed intemperately on *one* Sin, is *ipſo facto* become obnoxious unto the Surfeiting upon *all*; becauſe he has not any *Principle* or *Power* within him, by force of which he can be *ſure* to *abſtain* from *any*. And the reaſon of that reaſon is juſt as clear too. For the ſame *want of fear* to offend his Maker, the ſame *deſpight* offer'd to *Grace*, and the ſame *Callouſneſs* of *Conſcience*, which either *allows* or *betrays* him to any *one* wilfull Sin, leaves him *deſtitute* and *expos'd* to the *Power* of *All*. So that if, by not *committing*, he ſeems at any time to *abſtain* from this or that ſort of Vice, 'tis not his *Virtue*, but his *Luck*. And if any thing is to be thank'd, (beſides the *reſtraining* Mercy of God, who does often ſet his

Uvaque conſpectâ livorem ducit ab uvâ.

Hook into the Wicked man's Noſtrils,) he may thank his *Stars* for it; at leaſt his *Company*, or his *Cuſtom*, or the *Laws* of the *Country* wherein he lives, or at leaſt the good hap of his *Conſtitution*, as *not ſufficing* him for *ſome* Sins, or *not inclining* him to *others*; and many times ſo ſtrongly *byaſs'd* to darling obliquities on the *left* hand, as to be carried by *the ſame Byaſs* from other obliquities on the *right*. There being *ſome* ſorts of evil ſo very *oppoſite* unto each other, (and *inconſiſtent* at the ſame *inſtant*,) that *to abſtain* from *one Extream*, is not laudable in a Profeſſor who is *indulgent* unto the *other*. 'Tis *not thank-worthy* in a *Niggard*, not to be guilty of *Prodigality*. Nor is it the *Merit*, but the *neceſſity* of an extremely great *Coward*, if he is not found guilty of too much *Raſhneſs*. It being a ſad kind of Virtue which a Man owes onely to Vice; as when he abſtains from any *one* of two contrary evils, becauſe he cannot commit them *Both*.

§ 12. Again, ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ παντὸς, Abſtain from *All* evil, becauſe the *wilfull* Tranſgreſſion of *any one* of God's Commandments, makes us as liable to Judgment, (though not to ſo many degrees of Torment) as if we had broken *every one*. For what elſe can be the meaning of that ſaying

saying in S. *James*, that *if a man keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all?* He (for example) who abstains not from the *Intemperance* of the *Tongue*, (That enormous fleshly lust which is so *regnant* in these our days,) may be said to *offend* in *one sole Point* of Christianity; yet (like a little *Colloquintida* in a whole Pot of Broth) That offending in *one* Point sheds such an *Influence* upon *others*, as to invalidate and evacuate his *whole Religion*. *Jam.* 1.26. The reason of which is very evident, in that the same God that saith, *Thou shalt not steal, or commit Adultery*, does also say at the same Time, in the same Decalogue, and by the very same Authority, *Thou shalt not take the Name of thy God in vain, nor bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.* And the *Breach* of *these* Precepts, when it is *wilfull* or *habitual*, is as damnable in its nature as the *Transgression* of the *former*, and *all the rest.* For as the whole Nature of *Treason* against the *Majesty* of the *King*, does lie as really in the *compassing* or *contriving* of his Death, as in all the most *bloody* and *ouvert Acts* that can be nam'd; and any *one* of those Treasons is as *capital* as a *Thousand*; so the whole Nature of *Rebellion* against the *Majesty* of *God*, does lie as much in

Jam. 2. 10.

the *wilfull Breach* of any *one* of his Commands, as in *all together*; and Damnation is the wages, as well of *that one*, as of *all the reſt*. And as when a man is *hang'd* for committing Treaſon, it is *cold comfort* to him, that he is hang'd but for *one* Crime, and *not* for *many*; ſo 'twill but *little*, if at *all*, leſſen the *miſery* of the *Damn'd*, t at they were damn'd onely for *Drunkenneſs*, *Schiſm*, or *Hæreſie*, or for *another* ſuch habitual and mortal ſin, *not* for *Murther*, or *Adultery*, which were not laid unto their charge; or rather for breaking the *Fifth* Commandment, than for tranſgreſſing the other *Nine*. And therefore ſince *Impenitence* is indiſpenſably *deſtructive*,(though I know there is a *greater* and a *leſſer* Damnation,) be it but in *one*, or in *many* evils, it muſt concern us to abſtain with impartiality even from *All*.

§ 13. Again ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ παντὸς, Abſtain from *All* Evil; as well from the *leaſt*, as from the *greateſt*; becauſe our very *leaſt Sins* do gather a *Greatneſs* to themſelves, from the *greatneſs* of the *Object* we Sin *againſt*, and from the Greatneſs of the *Means* againſt *which* we Sin. (I mean our *Prayers*, and our *Sacraments*, and the frequency of our *Sermons*, by which whoever is not *mended*, is accidentally made *worſe*.)

And

And becauſe the leaſt Sins are apt to *lead* into the greateſt. Beſides, *Siracides* ſaid wiſely (in this ſenſe alſo,) *He that deſpiſeth ſmall things ſhall periſh by little and little.* Ecclus. 19.1. The *leaſt* Sins therefore cannot poſſibly be ſo *light*, as that they may ſafely be *ſlighted* by us; becauſe although what is *venial* can never loſe its Diſtinction from what is *mortal*, yet 'tis worthily to be fear'd that a man may *Sin mortally*, by *pleaſing* himſelf in his *venial Sins*; and by loving them *more* than the will of God. Nor are we *drown'd* with *more comfort*, by the *Sea*'s *ſtealing in* through *little crevices* into our Ship, than by our Ship's being *ſuddenly* and *at once* caſt into the *Sea.* Abſtain we therefore even from *all*, the moſt *diminutive Peccadillos*, (as men of *Latitudes* in *Practice* do love to call them,) not from *Evil* onely in *Deed*, but in *Word*, and *Thought* too. For if *Pythagoras* had rather a man ſhould throw out a* *Stone*, than a *word* or two raſhly and at a venture; yea, if *of every idle word Men ſhall give an account in the day of Judgment*, how much more of every *evil* one, when *falſeneſs* and *rancour* are cleaving to it? And we read that *evil Thoughts which proceed out of the Heart are* eſpecially *the things that defile the Man.* Matth. 15. 18, 19, 20.

* Αἰρετώτερόν σοι ἔστω λίθον εἰκῇ βάλλειν, ἢ λόγον ἀργόν. Pythag. Matth. 12. 36.

A Truth diſcernable, as by *other*, ſo by *this* reaſon alſo, That many *cuſtomary* Sinners may be forcibly reſtrain'd from their *evil Actions*, who yet can *never* be reſtrain'd from their *evil Thoughts* too. For as *Crows* from *Carrion* are not forced to abſtain by *Satiety it ſelf*, but ſtill abide upon the Place, as if they could never fill their *Eyes*, though they have their *Bellies*; ſo *cuſtomary* Sinners, when *Age* or *Sickneſs* hath made them *innocent* as to their *Actions*, do love to *think over* the Sins they have *not vigour* enough to *act*. They can no more ceaſe from Sin which *Cuſtom* has riveted in their Souls, than *Flies* inured to the *Shambles* are able to abſtain from the *ſmell* of *Meat*. Now whether the *Evil* of our *Thoughts* be of *Wilfulneſs*, or *Infirmity*, we are to exerciſe our ſelves in *abſtaining* from it. For we muſt *actually* abſtain from all *wilfull* evil; and we muſt *ſtudiouſly* abſtain from all the evil of *Infirmity*, ſo as to *hate*, and to *deplore*, and to *ſtrive againſt* it. This I ſay for our *Humiliation*; But I add for our *Comfort* too, that ſo long as we are *ſtriving* with the utmoſt of our Ablility againſt the *ſtream* of human Frailties, we are not liable to Wrath, in caſe the *violence* of the *Torrent* prevail againſt us. *Prevail againſt us* (I mean,) ſo as in

ſpite

ſpite of all our *ſtriving* to have *ſome reſidence*, though not habitually to *reign* in our mortal Bodies. For when we *ſtrive* againſt *That* from which we cannot *ſo abſtain*, as to be every way *ſinleſs*, Then we are reckon'd to *abſtain*, ſo far forth as to be *ſincere*. And though a *Sinleſneſs* is *not*, yet is a *ſingleneſs* or *ſincerity* the *indiſpenſable Requiſite* of a Chriſtian. And in *this* ſenſe at leaſt we muſt abſtain from *all* evil; as well from the *leaſt*, as from the *greateſt*.

§ 14. Laſtly, ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ παντὸς, Abſtain from *all* evil, although it ſhall not at all be *ſimply*, but *accidentally* ſuch. Many hundreds of things there are, however reducible unto four or five Heads, which are not *abſolutely* Evil, but yet are evil *ex accidenti*. And what is *evil* but *accidentally*, is *ſimply Good*. And ſo there are ſeveral *good things*, which though *abſolutely*, and *ſimply*, and *antecedently* ſuch, yet from *The ſame*, being conſider'd in ſome *Relations* and *Reſpects*, it is a Chriſtian man's Duty very carefully to *abſtain*. And in conſequence of This, *Abſtain* from every *good* thing, which thy *Conſcience* does *condemn*; and from every *good* thing, which thy *Conſcience doubts of*; and from every *good* thing, by which *thy Brother* is made

made to *ſtumble*, and to *fall* headlong into Sin; and from every *good* thing which is *comparatively* evil, by being heedleſly *preferr'd* to what is very much *better*; and from every good *Thing*, which ſtrongly adminiſters an *Occaſion*, and a *Temptation* unto evil. I ſay *abſtain* from the *firſt* ſort, becauſe though *there is nothing unclean in it ſelf*, (of all thoſe Meats which are food for men,) yet *to him that eſteemeth any thing to be unclean, to Him* (in that Errour) *it is unclean.* Rom.14.14. And *abſtain* from the *ſecond* ſort, becauſe *he that doubteth is damn'd if he eat, in that he eateth not of Faith, for whatſoever is not of Faith is Sin.* Rom.14.23. And *abſtain* from the *third* ſort, becauſe though *every kind* of edable is ſimply *Pure*, (and ſo may lawfully be eaten,) yet *it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.* And therefore *if thou haſt Faith*, and underſtandeſt thy Chriſtian Liberty, make a private uſe of it *betwixt God and thy ſelf. For happy is He who condemneth not himſelf in that thing which he alloweth.* Rom.14.20,21,22. Again, *Abſtain* from the *fourth* ſort, becauſe God hath declared *He will have Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, Mat.9.13. And the *ſaving* of a *Sheep* on the *Sabbath Day*, rather than the *reſting* from bodily *labour.* (*Mat.*

*Mat.*12.11.) and rather a being *reconcil'd* to an *injur'd Brother*, than *bringing a Gift unto the Altar*, (*Mat.*5.23.24. Last of all let us *abstain* from the *fifth* sort of Objects, which are simply *good* enough, but accidentally *evil*, because of the Precept of our Apostle in the words of my Text; which, though it may seem to be a *rigorous*, is yet a *mercifull* Command. For 'tis *easier*, whilst we are *innocent*, to *abstain* from the guilt of any *one* act of Sin, than having yielded unto *one*, to forbear *another*. *Abstinence* from *evil* is nothing else but an *Act* of *Fasting*. And certainly He who cannot *fast* from the *Approaches* of Impiety, will much *less fast* from the *Presence* of it. If we cannot well *abstain* from *conversing* with the *Occasions*, how much *less* from the *Act* of a pleasant evil? or if not from the *Act*, how much *less* from the *Habit*? *Ægrius ejicitur, quàm non admittitur Hostis.* 'Tis very much easier *not to admit*, than to *drive out* an Enemy. Very much easier to *prevent*, than to *cure* a *Leprosie*. Which our Apostle well considering, was not onely of the *Opinion*, but made it the Rule of his Practice also, (in his whole Ninth Chapter of the First Epistle to the *Corinthians*,) that to keep far enough off from doing any thing *unlawfull*, he was to *abstain* Hos.6.6.

from many things which were *lawfull* too. Nor does he content himſelf here to ſay, Abſtain from all *Habits* and *Acts* of Evil, but from all *Appearance* of it. And ſo I am faln upon the *means* whereby our *Abſtinence* may be *completed*, the *laſt Particular* in the Diviſion.

Ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους, &c.

Abſtain from all *Appearance* of Evil.

§ 15. And to the end that we may do ſo, in every *ſenſe* and *acception* the word will bear, let *the Caveat* be extended to theſe *two Heads*. Firſt of all to thoſe things, which, though *not evil* in *themſelves*, yet to *others*, or to *us*, do *appear* to be ſo; Next to things, which, though *not ſinfull*, (no not ſo much as in *appearance*,) do put upon us a kind of *Byaſs*, and *Propenſity* to Sin. To the *former* I ſhall refer, whatſoever Things are *lawfull*, but yet *uncomly*, or *inexpedient*. I ſhall refer unto the *later*, whatſoever Things are *lawfull*, but of *dangerous conſequence*; not *formally* evil, but groſly evil in the *effect*.

§ 16. And firſt *abſtain* from thoſe things, which if not *evil* in *themſelves*, yet to *others*, or to *us*, do *appear* to be ſo; and by conſequence though they are *lawfull*, conſider'd ſimply in their *Natures*, yet in certain *conjunctures* they cannot *lawfully* be done. As (for example) it

is

is **lawfull* to *eat of things*, which either are or have been *offer'd in Sacrifice unto Idols*; which yet we [a] cannot *eat lawfully*, if in the *Presence* of a *Brother* who hath either a *condemning* or *doubting* Conscience. We must *beware that this our Liberty become not a Stumbling-block to them that are weak.* And therefore *He that had knowledge* (in the Times of the Apostle,) *was not* in reason *to sit at meat in the Idol's Temple*, for fear that *he who had none should be imboldned to eat of things offer'd unto Idols*, even *against* his over *weak* and *erroneous Conscience.* So that although *not to abstain* for *another* man's sake, when we *need not* for our *own*, cannot be said to be a Sin through any *unlawfulness* in the *Object indulged to*; yet 'tis a Breach of that *Rule* which was set by S. *Paul* for all to walk by, *That no man put a Stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.* Rom. 14. 13. (Which Rule cannot extend to those things *Indifferent*, which being such but *antecedently*, are *consequentially Necessary*, in as much as they are under the *Obligation* of a *Command*, and a *Command* from That *Authority* which God has *commanded* us to obey. And this Parenthesis being premis'd for the preventing of Mistakes, I proceed to give an Instance of the Case but

* 1 Cor. 8. 4. 8.

a *Ver.* 9.

Ver. 10.

now mention'd. For) Thus the *Liberty* to *fly*, for the *eſcaping* of a *ſhamefull and painfull Death*, though very *lawfull* as to its *nature*, may be *unlawfull*, as to its *uſe*; in regard of many *Circumſtances* wherewith the Caſe may be *apparell'd*. For firſt (however it is *lawfull*,) it may be highly *inexpedient*, as to the *ſcandal* it may give to our *weaker Brethren*; (concerning which I have ſpoken enough already;) And next, (however it is *lawfull*,) it may be *ſcandalouſly indecent*, as to the *Gravity* of a man's *Age*, and the *Dignity* of his *Calling*. In each of which caſes, That which is *lawfull* in *it ſelf*, is notwithſtanding *not allowable* in the Circumſtances propos'd; becauſe inconſiſtent with *two* main *Virtues*; to wit, with *Charity* in the *firſt* Inſtance, and with *Prudence* in the *ſecond*. An *Example* we have of *Both* in the renowned *Eleazer*, (2 *Macc.* 6.) Who being ſentenced to the Torments for refuſing to eat of *unlawfull Meats*, would not *baſely* ſave his life, no not by eating *ſuch Meat* as was *lawfull* for him. And for this his Reſolution he gave *two reaſons*. Firſt, he argued from the *Indecency*, and again from the *Danger* of it. 'Twould be *indecent* to *Himſelf*, and as *dangerous* to *others*; who ſtraight would follow his

Copioſiùs hæc Narratio habenda eſt apud Joſephum, *in Libello cui Titulus,* περὶ αὐτοκράτους λογισμοῦ.

his Example, as well of *Cowardize*, as of *Courage*, by whichſoever of the two he ſhould chance to *lead* them. Firſt, he would not *bring fleſh of his own Proviſion, and make as if he did eat of what was commanded by the King*, (as his old Friends at Court would fain have had him, v. 21.) becauſe he was told by his *Diſcretion*, that 'twas not ſutable to the *honour* of his reverend *Gray-head*; (v. 23.) and He would ſhew himſelf *ſuch as his Age required*, (v. 27.) Again, He would not ſave his Life by ſuch an *appearance* of Impiety, as the eating of what was *lawfull* in lieu of what was *unlawfull*, becauſe he was prompted by his *Charity*, not to indanger *many young Perſons* their being *betray'd* by that Artifice, *to think that old Eleazer, when he was Fourſcore years and Ten, had at laſt gone away to a ſtrange Religion.* (v. 24, 25. Whereas 'twas very fit for *Him*, who was *one of the Principal of the Scribes*, (v. 18.) *to leave a notable Example* of *Sincerity* and *Courage*, and of *Daringneſs* to *die* for the *Laws* of *God*. (v. 28. and 31. Thus there are very many things, which though *lawfull* to us as *Chriſtians*, are yet *unſeemly* for us as *Men*; and do *diſhonour* our *Vocation*, even then when they do not *defile* our *Conſcience*. For how *many Trades* are there,

2 Macc. 6. *à v.* 18. *ad v.* 31.

very *lawfull* in themſelves, which yet by *us* of the *Clergy* cannot *lawfully* be *driven?* And therefore *Abſtinence* from *Theſe* is to be reckon'd as a *Duty*, at leaſt to our *Quality*, and our *Rank*, if not preciſely to our *Religion.* Abſtain we therefore (as much as may be) from all that carries any *appearance*, or *ſhew* of Evil; And as from all that is *Expedient*, unleſs it appears to be *lawfull* too; ſo from all that is *lawfull*, but *not expedient.*

Sed fugitare magis ſimulacra & pabula Amoris, Atque aliò ſtudeat animi traducere motus. Lucret. *l.* 4. *de Remedio Amoris.*

§ 17. Again, Abſtain from thoſe things, which though *not* evil in *themſelves*, are yet *Incentives*, or *Occaſions*, or *Introductories* to evil; and however not *formally*, yet *effectively* ſuch. For as it is not onely ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*, but over and above *Thou ſhalt not covet*; ſo the way *not to covet*, is *not to ſee*, *not to taſt*, *not to touch* ſuch an Object, as is naturally apt to *inchant* the *Senſes.* Our *Saviour* tells us of *Adultery* in the *Heart.* And the Apoſtle S. *Peter*, of *Adultery* in the *Eye.* And *Moſes* preſſing his Congregation to an effectual *Abſtinence* from the *Evil*, which *Corah* and *others* had newly done, ſaid, *Depart from the Tents of theſe wicked men, and Touch nothing of theirs.* Depart from all ſuſpected *Perſons*, and *Places* too. For *he that toucheth Pitch ſhall be defiled therewith.*

Exod. 20. 17.

Mat. 5. 28.

2 Pet. 2. 14.

Num. 16. 26.

Eccluſ. 13. 1.

And

And * *he that loves danger ſhall periſh in it. Whatſoever is born of the Fleſh is Fleſh*; (Joh.3. 6.) Nor does the *Wax* with more Aptneſs take an *Impreſſion* from the *Seal*, than the *Fleſh* from the *Bait* of an *ill Affection*. Inſomuch that ſome parts of the holy Scripture were (in the Times of *Caſſianus*) not intruſted to the Ears of the younger Chriſtians, * *Ne noxiæ Titillationis ſtimulus excitaretur*. He that hopes to be *Safe* whilſt he converſeth with *Incentives* to any Sin, is thought by *Solomon* as *Irrational*, as if he ſhould *walk on hot Coals, and hope his feet will not be burnt*; *or take fire into his Boſom*, in a confidence that *it will not conſume his cloths*. *Prov.*7.27,28. Nay [a] S. *Bernard* was of opinion, That to be *converſant* with a *Woman*, and yet be *innocent* in *converſe*, is a *difficulter work than to raiſe the Dead*. And then the *Hebrew Wiſe men* could not be *righteous overmuch*, when they *prohibited all diſcourſe betwixt Man and Woman*, (excepting onely That of an *Husband* with a *Wife*,) both in regard of the *Scandal*, and *Danger* of it; the *poſſible* ſcandal unto *others*, and *actual* Danger unto *Themſelves*.

* *Ch.*3.*v.*26.

* Caſſian. *lib.*19. *Collat.* §. 16.

a *Cum fœminâ ſemper eſſe, & non cognoſcere fœminam, nonne plus eſt quàm mortuum ſuſcitare? Quod minus eſt non potes, & quod majus eſt vis credam tibi?* D. Bernard. *Super Cantica Serm.*65. *p.* 760.

§ 18. How very nearly it does concern even the *graveſt*, and the *moſt ſafe*, to *abſtain* from all

all Occasions and *Opportunities* of evil, may be collected from the Examples both of * *Andreas Bishop of Fundo*, and of the exemplary *Martinian*, a famous *Hermit*. Whereof the *former* was fain to banish an *holy Matron* out of his House, because he found he could not *safely* injoy her *sight*, nor be protected by *her* Innocence, from the great Hazard of his *own*. The [a] *Later* finding he could not otherwise be exempted from the *Occasions* and *Baits* of Sin, threw Himself *first* into the *Fire*, for the *refining* of his Desires; and after That into the *Water*, whereby to *drown* them. Nay as if the *holy Angels* were not fit to be intrusted with such Temptations, not onely *Philo* and *Josephus*, but divers *Fathers of the Church*, (*Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Lactantius*,) have understood by *the Sons of God* who could not innocently gaze upon the *Daughters of men*, (*Gen.*6.2.) Not the *Potentates* of the *Earth*, but even *the Angels of Heaven*. Now though I think with *Theodoret*, and most of the ancient Commentators, that the Fathers were in an Errour who so expounded; yet

* *Nec res est dubia quam narro: quia penè tanti in eâ testes sunt, quanti ejusdem loci Habitatores. Quandam Sanctimonialem secum permisit habitare, certus de suâ ejusq; continentiâ, Andreas Fundanæ Civitatis Episcopus. Mox de suo habitaculo non solùm eandem Dei Famulam, sed omnem quoque fœminam illinc expulit.* Greg. Mag. *Dialog. l.*3. c.7. *fol.*29.

[a] Laur. Surius *T.*1. *Die* 13 *Febr.* —*Misit Angelos Deus ad Tutelam cultumque Generis Humani --- Illos cum hominibus commorantes Diabolus paulatim ad vitia pellexit, & mulierum congressibus inquinavit. Tum in Cœlum ob Peccata non recepti ceciderunt in Terram. Sic eos Diabolus Δαιμονάρχης ex Angelis Dei, suos fecit satellites ac Ministros.* Lact. *l.*2.c.15. p.65. Ἦσάν τινες ἄγγελοι, ἀκηράτοις ἡδοναῖς ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἁλόντες, ἐρασθέντες δεινῶν καταπεπτώκασιν. Clem. Alex Strom. *l.*3.p.450. Οἱ δ' ἄγγελοι, παρεξάντες τὸ σφέτερον τάξιν, γυναικῶν μίξεσιν ἠττήθησαν, καὶ παῖδας ἐτέκνωσαν, οἵτινές εἰσιν οἱ λεγόμενοι Δαίμονες. Just. Mar. *Apol* 1.p 44.

yet it assures us of their *Opinion*, how much *Temptations* are to be *shun'd*, and how carefully we should *fly* the *Occasions* of them. *Igni cum Fœno non bene convenit*, said *Martinian* to a *Beauty* whom he had *pull'd* out of the *Sea*, but would not *trust* himself with when she came to *Land*. But more remarkable were the words of the pious Presbyter **Ursinus*, when a *good Woman* came to help him *as he was giving up the Ghost*, (one whom he *lov'd* too as a *Sister*, but yet *avoided* as an *Enemy*,) *Recede à me Mulier, adhuc vivit Igniculus, Paleam tolle.* As if he fear'd that That *Stricture* or *Spark* of life remaining in him, might have grown into a *Flame* at the *sight* of *Chaff*.

§ 19. Now since it cannot but be inferr'd from the whole Tenor of my Discourse, That the way to become *able to abstain from all evil*, is to abstain from all *approach* and *appearance* of it, from all that does *lead* and *allure* us to it, from all that has a *Tendency* and *Byass* towards it; Nothing remains but that we *labour*, in every Instance of *Temptation* and *Ghostly danger*, (if we are willing to use the *means* whereby our Abstinence may be completed,) to *frustrate* the *Malice* of the *Devil*, to *baffle* the *Arguments* of the *Flesh*, and to *tread* under our *feet* an

* *Ex tempore Ordinationis acceptæ Presbyteram suam ut sororem diligens, sed quasi Hostem cavens, ad se propiùs accedere nunquam sinebat.——Et ab eâ sibi communionem funditùs Familiaritatis abscideràt. &c.* Greg. Mag. *Dial. l.4. c.11. fol.* 37.

inſulting *World*, even by carrying our ſelves *wiſely* in all our ways, and by keeping conſtant *watch* over all our Walkings; and that we never ſuffer our ſelves, either by *ſtratagem*, or by *force*, to be *diverted* or *drawn aſide* from this *ſaving Method*, until our well-meant *Indeavours* ſhall all expire into *perfection*; our Contendings *with* the Fleſh, into Triumphs *over* it; our rigid *Abſtinences* from *Evil*, into the raviſhing *Injoyments* of all that's *Good*; our Temporary *Lent*, into an Everlaſting *Jubile*; our ſhort *Self-denials*, into the *Pleaſures* of *Æternity*; our Days of *Mourning* and *Mortification*, into endleſs *Fruitions* of *Bliß* and *Glory*.

Which thou, O God, of thy Mercy vouchſafe unto us, for the Glory of thy Name, and for the Worthineſs of thy Son; To whom, with thee, O Father, in the Unity of the Spirit, be all Honour and Glory both now and forever. *Amen*.

OF ABSTAINING IN GENERAL FROM Fleshly Lusts.

1 PET. 2. 11.

Dearly Beloved, I beseech you, as Strangers, and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against your Soul. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil Doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of Visitation.

§ 1. SAint *Peter*, as a good *Builder*, (a Spiritual *Workman who needed not to be asham'd*,) having prudently laid the first *Foun-*

dation of his Diſcourſe in the former Chapter, to wit, the *Holy Spirit of God efficaciouſly working by his word*; And having *erected* thereupon the three grand *Pillars* of *Chriſtianity*, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*; does ſtraight proceed in this Chapter to ſuperſtruct on thoſe Pillars by way of general Exhortation. Which though particularly directed unto the *Chriſtians* of the *Diſperſion* in ſeveral Provinces of *Aſia*, yet 'twas equally *intended*, and is as *applicable* to *Us* too, on whom *the ends of the World are come*. Now his general Exhortation is briefly This. Firſt of all, that we lay aſide all kind of *Malice*, and *Hypocriſie*, and the *malignity* of the *Tongue*. (v. 1.) Secondly, That as Infants do ſuck the nouriſhment of their Bodies from the *ſame Mother's Breaſt* from whom they had newly receiv'd their *Being*; ſo alſo *We*, being *regenerate* by the good *word* of *God*, and thereby reputed as *new-born Babes*, ſhould from the *ſame word* of *God*, ſuck out a *nouriſhment* for our Souls, and thereby grow unto *perfection*. (v. 2.) This *word* as he calls by the name of *milk*, ſo he commends it to our *Palats*, as *ſweet*, and *wholeſom*, (v. 3.) After which he *goes on* with his *Exhortation*, but *ſteps aſide* from his *Metaphor*, and addreſſeth himſelf to a *new ſcheme* of *Rhetorick*.

torick. Calling *Chriſt* a *Living-Stone*, (v.4.) and the *Members* of *Chriſt* a *Spiritual Houſe*, (v. 5.) and proving *Both* out of *Eſa*, (v. 6.) Next he ſhews the *oppoſition* betwixt the *Obedient*, and the *Rebellious*; repreſenting *Jeſus Chriſt* as a *ſupport* unto the *former*, but to the *later* a *Stone of ſtumbling*, and a *Rock of offence.* (v.7,8.) Then, having ſaid how God had taken us from out the men of *this world*, and made us a *choſen generation*, *a royal Prieſthood*, *an holy Nation*, *a peculiar People*, *a People called out of darkneſs*, *into his marvellous light*, (v.9,10.) He here proceeds to exhort us, with ſomewhat a greater degree of warmth, that we behave our ſelves *ſuitably* to our *Vocation.*

Dearly beloved, I beſeech you, as Strangers, and Pilgrims, abſtain, &c.

§ 2. A very pertinent Exhortation to all the Duties of the Lent; to Chriſtian Purity, and Strictneſs, and to Abſtinence from Enormities of every kind. *Abſtain from Fleſhly Luſts*, that is, (as S. *Paul* does explain S. *Peter*,) from Rioting and Drunkenneſs, from Chambering and Wantonneſs, from Strife and Envy, from Malcontentedneſs and Sedition, from Revengefulneſs and Rebellion, from Schiſm and Hæreſie. For that Theſe are all equally the *Luſts of the*

Fleſh, or the *Fleſhly Luſts*, I ſhall neceſſarily ſhew in the proper Places of my Diſcourſe. The Exhortation (taken in groſs) does conſiſt of two Parts. The *material* part of it is expreſs'd in theſe words, [*Abſtain from Fleſhly Luſts*, and *have your Converſation honeſt*,] The *formal* part of it in theſe, [*Dearly beloved, I beſeech you.*] Thus we ſee the *Exhortation* is uſher'd in with an *Intreaty*, and This with ſuch a *Compellation*, as ſhews an *Earneſtneſs* of *Affection* in him that ſpeaks. His *Exhortation* is ſo *important*, ſo *perſwaſive* his *Intreaty*, and ſo *meltingly obliging* his *Compellation*, that hardly any thing can be added to give an *energy* or *weight* to S. *Peter*'s Preaching. Though he deſires no more of them, than to have *mercy* upon *themſelves*, yet he begs for it as *heartily*, as if he were *begging* for his *Life*. *Dearly beloved, I beſeech you, I come unto you as a Petitioner*, that ye will not be ſo tranſported out of your *Intereſt* and your *Wits*, as madly to *ruin your ſelves for ever*. I make it my *humble Supplication*, that ye will rather *live happy* to all *Eternity*. If there is any thing in the World with which you are willing to oblige me, do not wilfully *run* upon
Iſa. 33. 14. *Swords* and *Halberts*; Seek not *to dwell with devouring Fire*; Be not ſo fooliſh as to catch at

ever-

everlaſting Burnings; But *be of an honeſt Converſation*, and *abſtain from Fleſhly Luſts which war againſt the Soul.*

Thus S. *Peter*'s *Exhortation* is very Affectionate and *Earneſt*. And taking our ſelves to be the Perſons to whom the Exhortative does belong, We have it inforced upon our hearts by *Five* ſtrong Arguments or Motives. All the worthier of our Attention, becauſe ariſingout of the Text.

The Firſt Argument is taken from the *Condition* of the *Perſons*, to whom the *earneſt Exhortation* is here directed. We are *Citizens* of *Heaven*, and but *Strangers* upon *Earth*, and therefore we muſt live as *becometh* Strangers. Nor are we *Strangers* onely, but *Pilgrims*. Not onely πάροικοι, out of our *own* Country, but withall παρεπίδημοι, that is, *Travellers* in a *ſtrange* one. For this I take to be the difference between theſe Two, πάροικος, *Strangers*, and παρεπίδημος, *Pilgrims*, That though they are *Both* out of their Country, yet the former have an *Aboad*, but the later *none*. Thoſe have ſome kind of *Reſt*, but Theſe are always in a *Journy*. Thoſe *inhabit* a foreign Country, whilſt Theſe are onely *paſſing through it*. And ſeeing this is our Condition, that we relate to this World, not as *Strangers* onely, but *Paſſengers*,

gers, Men whoſe *Houſes* are but as *Inns*, and whoſe *Life* is but a *Pilgrimage*, it concerns us to *walk* as becometh *Pilgrims*; that is, to manage our Converſation with ſo much *warineſs* and *fear*, as not to lie open to *juſt Reproof*.

The Second Argument is taken from the *Quality* of the *Things*, in oppoſition to which our Apoſtle's Exhortation is here contriv'd. Theſe are σαρκικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι, ſuch *Fleſhly Luſts*, as are very pleaſant *Flatterers*, but no true *Friends*. For though they are fawning upon the *Fleſh*, yet they are not at all the *leſs*, but the *greater Enemies* to the *Spirit*. And how *deſirable* ſoever they may appear unto the *Body*, yet στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς, they are implacably, though inviſibly, ever *warring againſt the Soul*.

The Third Argument is taken from the Conſideration of our *Credit*, with the *Enemies* of *Chriſt* amongſt whom we *live*. Our *Converſation* is to be *honeſt*, ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, *among the Gentiles*. And that for this reaſon, ἵνα μὴ καταλαλῶσιν, That however they do *maliciouſly*, they may not *deſervedly* ſpeak againſt us. Whereas in caſe we live *diſhoneſtly*, and *indulgently* to our *Luſts*, we ſhall help them to *excuſe*, if not to *juſtifie* their Malignities againſt our Perſons, and our Profeſſion: And they will have a *juſt*

a *just ground* whereupon to *defame* us as *Evil-Doers.*

The Fourth Argument is taken from the Consideration of our *Enemies* Welfare; To wit, their *present Conversion*, and *future Safety.* In whose sight if we converse as becometh *Christ's Servants*, by our *abstaining from Fleshly Lusts*, and *having an honest Conversation*, ἐποπτεύσαντες saith the Text, *They then will look upon us with reverence*, and judge of our *Principles* by our *good Works.* We shall not onely *stop* their *Mouths*, but *weaken* the *violence* of their *Hands*, and help to *mollifie* their *Hearts*, and become happily *instrumental* to the *salvation* of their *Souls.*

The Fifth Argument is taken from the *Glory of God* and its great *Advancement.* We must indeavour so to live, as to *adorn the Doctrine of Jesus Christ.* Our Conversation must be such, as *becomes* the Gospel. Our *way* of *Walking* must be *exemplary*, and our *Behaviour* must be *exact*, that *Christ's Religion* being *credited*, his *Kingdom* also may be *inlarged*, whilst by the *Allective* of our *Example* men will be *won* from *their corruptions*, and shew forth the Praises of our God, *who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.* And this, as 'tis the *last*,

ſo 'tis the *beſt* and *chiefeſt* Argument for our punctual *abſtaining from Fleſhly Luſts*, and *having an honeſt Converſation*, ἵνα δοξάσωσι τὸν Θεὸν, That *Men* (by ſeeing our good works) may not glorifie *Us*, but δοξάσωσι τὸν Θεὸν, *may glorifie God in the Day of Viſitation.*

§ 3. Theſe are all S. *Peter*'s Arguments. Nor have I ſtept either *beyond* or beſide the Text for the finding of them. And for the preſſing of the Duty He here injoyns, never were there more or better Arguments in the world, by any Pen-man contriv'd into fewer Words. Before I inſiſt upon any Argument whereby to *inforce* the Exhortation, I muſt firſt of all explain the *Exhortation it ſelf*, Firſt obſerving the importance of *Fleſhly Luſts*, and then what is meant by *abſtaining* from them.

In order to the Firſt, two Things are to be known. How we ought to underſtand the *moral* uſe of the word *Fleſh*, (eſpecially as it is taken in Several parts of the New Teſtament,) and what is meant by the *Luſtings* of it.

By the word *Fleſh* in the New Teſtament is very commonly meant the *Appetite*. This is the ſeat of our *Affections*, the ſubject *matter* of *Vice* and *Virtue*. Our *Affections* are ever converſant in *purſuing*, or *eſchewing*, in *injoying*, or

or in *ſuffering* their ſeveral Objects. Their *Objects* in the general are *Good*, or *Evil*. And *both* are conſider'd in *Themſelves*, or in *relation* to the *Circumſtances* wherewith they happen to be *cloath'd*. *Good* conſider'd *in it ſelf* is at once both the *Object* and *Cauſe* of *Love*. But in relation to its *Circumſtances*, it is productive of *other Paſſions*. For, if *preſent*, it cauſeth *Joy*; and if *abſent*, it breeds *Deſire*. Again, the *Good* which is *Abſent* is either *attainable*, or it is *not*. If the *former*, it cauſeth *Hope*; and if the *later*, it breeds *Deſpair*. In like manner *an evil Object* is to be taken in its *abſolute*, or in its *relative* Conſideration. In the *former* 'tis productive of ſimple *Hatred*; but in the *later* it produceth either *Sorrow*, or *Averſation*. The Firſt, if it is *preſent*; and if *abſent*, then the Second. Again, the *evil* that is *abſent* is either *avoidable*, or it is *not*. If the *former*, it cauſeth *Boldneſs*: but if the *later*, it cauſeth *Fear*. Thus we briefly ſee the *Rivulets* of all our *Paſſions*, or *Affections*, together with the *Fountain* from whence they *flow*. Now ſo many of our *Affections* as are reducible to *Deſire*, may be called not improperly our ſeveral *Luſts*. Things ſo *neceſſary*, and *natural*, and *indifferent* in *themſelves*, that being *abſtractively*, and

preciſely, and *antecedently* conſider'd, they are equally in an aptitude of becoming both the matter of *Vice*, and *Virtue*. But when *extravagant*, as to the *Object*, or *exorbitant*, as to the *Meaſure*; Then they are, and are juſtly call'd, either the *Luſts of the Fleſh*, or the *Fleſhly Luſts*.

§ 4. Now 'tis obſervable in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Teſtament, that *Luſt* is many times Synonymous both with *Avarice*, and *Deſire*. The Greek ἐπιθυμεῖν, and the Latin *concupiſcere*, does equally Signifie them *all*. And thence it is that *all Three* have been * *promiſcuouſly* us'd in our *Engliſh Bibles*. For *there* we meet as well with *lawfull*, as with *unlawfull Luſts*; and as well with a *good*, as an *evil Avarice*; (and with *Both* as they are taken in the innocent ſenſe of our *Deſires*;) Nay, there we meet with ſuch a *Luſting*, as is not onely *lawfull*, but alſo *eminently good*. We have an Example of the *firſt*, *Deut.*12.15. *Thou mayeſt kill and eat Fleſh in all thy Gates, whatſoever thy Soul luſteth after*; that is, whatever it *deſireth*, or hath an *Appetite unto*. We have an Inſtance of the *ſecond*, in the Firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*; where though 'tis ſaid, that *no Covetous ſhall ever inherit the Kingdom of God*, yet

* *See* Deut. 14.26. *compared with* Deut.12.15, 20,21.

1 Cor.6.10.

yet there are things which we must *Covet*, and *Covet earnestly*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.*12.31. We have a Specimen of the *Third* too, *Gal.*5.17. Whereas the *Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, so doth the Spirit against the Flesh.* And this does shew us what is meant by the *Law in the Members*, and the *Law in the Mind*, which are said to be *warring*, that is, to be *Lusting* against each other, *Rom.*7.23. the last of which is as good, as the first is evil. 1 Cor.14.39.

§ 5. But here we must not impose that obvious Fallacy on our selves, which is, *à benè divisis ad malè conjuncta.* For though *the Flesh*, and *the Lusts*, being *in Sensu diviso*, have both their *innocent Significations*, yet *in Sensu composito*, they ever signifie what is *sinfull.* Nor onely the *Breaches* of any *one*, but of *several Precepts* in the Decalogue. For in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, not *Adultery* onely, but *Murthers*, not *Fornication* onely, but *Witchcraft*, *Idolatry*, *Seditions*, Hæresies, are reckon'd up by S. *Paul* amongst *the works of the Flesh*, and that in perfect opposition to *the Fruits of the Spirit.* Nor is it onely said (in the last Precept of the Decalogue,) *Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife*, But *not his House, not his Servant, not his Oxe, not his Ass, no nor*

any thing elſe that is thy Neighbours. So that *all evil Covetings* are *Fleſhly Luſts*, in reſpect of the *Principle* from which they *come*, though not always of the *Object* towards which they *tend.* Though in regard unto the *later*, they are not all Luſtings *after* the Fleſh, yet in regard unto the *former*, they all are Luſtings *of* the Fleſh, or σαρκικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι, *Fleſhly Luſts.* 'Twas ſuch a Luſt of *Curoſity*, joyn'd with another of *Ambition*, which made *Eve eat of forbidden fruit.* 'Twas ſuch a Fleſhly Luſt of *Envy*, which made *Cain* murther his Brother *Abel.* 'Twas ſuch a Fleſhly Luſt of *Avarice*, which made an *Achan* lay hold of *the golden Wedge.* Nor was it leſs a *Fleſhly Luſt* which moved *Abſolon* to compaſs his Father's *Kingdom*, than That by which he defiled his Father's *Concubines.*

§ 6. Now from *all* theſe *Fleſhly Luſts* we are exhorted to *abſtain*, as may appear by their *Antitheſis* to ſuch a Chriſtian *Converſation*, as is not onely to be *chaſt*, but univerſally *honeſt* among the Gentiles. And yet from thoſe in ſpecial manner are we exhorted to *abſtain*, which are peculiarly compriz'd in the *ſeventh Precept* of the Decalogue, and are expreſſed by the name of *laſcivious Luſts*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3.

For

For those were chiefly the *Fleshly Lusts* of the *Gnosticks*, from whose unclean course of life the *Jewish Christians* of the *Dispersion* were here *dehorted*. And so they signifie with S. *John*, when he reduces all the Army of our Spiritual *Warriers* to *Three Brigades*, and makes an eminent Distinction of the *Lust of the Flesh*, both from the *Lust of the Eye*, and the *Pride of Life*. 1 Joh. 2. 16. Gal. 5. 16. Eph. 2. 3.

§ 7. But what kind of *Abstinence* is here intended? not such a complete and *total Abstinence*, as is from all kinds of *Lusting* without exception. For This may seem as vain a Task, as to *Abstain* from being *Men*; since 'tis evident from the *Confessions* both of *Saxony*, and *Helvetia*, as also from the 9th. of our 39 *Articles*, That *Concupiscence remains in the most regenerate*. To which implicit Objection, I answer Thus. That though the *Precept* for *abstaining* does refer both to the *Object* and *Act* of Lusting, yet it is with this Difference, that we must *totally* abstain from the *things Lusted after*, and *as much as in us lies* from the *Lust it self*. For if we cannot *prevent* a Lust from ever entring into the *heart*, yet we *can* and *must* keep it from breaking forth into our *Actions*, and from the *Presence* of the *Temptation* which

which leads to *Both*. Many *pretend* to Diſabilities to which they have not a *real Title*. It clearly lies in our power, to make a *Covenant* with our *Eyes*; to ſet a *Watch* over our *Ears*; to keep the *Door* of our *Lips*; to thruſt *Impediments* in the *way* betwixt Us and Danger; and by the help of God's Grace, (which is not wanting unto any who are not wanting unto It,) it alſo lies in our Power to keep a *Guard* about our *Hearts*; to put a *Bridle* upon our *Wills*; and give a check to the Cariere of wild Affections. So that if I may paraphraſe S. *Peter*'s Exhortation, it will in the whole amount to This: Dearly beloved, I beſeech you, as arrant Foreigners and Exoticks on this ſide Heaven, that ye religiouſly *abſtain* from *forbidden Objects* in the general, and eſpecially from Thoſe which are *moſt Treacherous* to the *Fleſh*. Give not any *ſatisfaction* to carnal motions, and be not any whit *indulgent* to looſe Deſires. *Make no proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfill the Luſts thereof.* But keep it rather from *Incentives*, and try to *ſtarve* it. As *it wars* againſt *you*, ſo do *you* againſt *it*. Beſiege it *cloſely* on every ſide; *Block up* all its *Avenues*; *Intercept* its *Proviſions* by *Prayer* and *Faſting*. Reduce the *Fleſh* to ſuch an *Exigence* for want of *Victuals*

Rom. 13. 14. Gal. 5. 16.

tuals and *Ammunition*, as may effectually *compel* it to make a *Surrender* unto the *Spirit*. Put your selves with Resolution into a *moral Impossibility* of being worsted. And in order thereunto, Abstain not onely from the *Food* of your Fleshly Lusts, but withall from the *Borders* and *Confines* of it; not onely from the *All* that may *cause* uncleanness, but from all that may *occasion* the things that cause it.

§ 8. For here 'tis worthy our observation, (in the management of our *warfare* against those *Enemies*, which do often the more *successfully*, because *invisibly* war against us,) That we are *otherwise* to encounter with the Temptations of the *Irascible*, than with the *other more insnaring* ones of the *concupiscible* Faculty. The onely way to quell the *first*, is indeed by *Fighting*, but the way to beat the *second*, must be by *Flight*. The way to vanquish those *Allurements* of *Flesh and Blood*, which are vulgarly express'd by the name of *Beauties*, is not boldly to *contend with*, but rather prudently to *abstain* from the *Presence* of them. We commonly reckon that a *Garrison* is little less than *half taken*, when it admits of any *parley* with its *Besiegers*. To enter into a *Treaty*, is the Beginning of a Surrender; and then with a greater

force of reaſon. He that approaches ſo very *near*, as to *wreſtle* with the Temptations He ought to *fly*, and entertains ſo much *commerce*, as to *combat* with them, is like a very *ſtout Champion* who falls to *grapple* with a man that is *arm'd* with *Sickneſs*; I mean the *Leproſie*, or the *Plague*, or other *diſeaſes* of *Infection*. Becauſe notwithſtanding he *throws* the *man* far enough, it will be hard to clear himſelf from all *contagion* of his *Diſeaſe*. Many are led into Captivity to the Law of Sin, by not diſtinguiſhing as they ought, (and as holy men of old were wont to do,) betwixt Temptations and Temptations of ſeveral ſorts; I mean the Temptations they ought to *fight with*, and the Temptations they ought to *fly*. To make it profitable and plain, I will illuſtrate what I ſay, by one or two Scriptural Examples.

§ 9. When nothing but the *Patience* of *Job* was tempted, by the *loſs* of his *Eſtate*, and the *deſtruction* of his *Children*, *Tunc ſurrexit*, ſaith the Text, *Then Job aroſe*, rouz'd up himſelf like a ſturdy Lion; and as it were *girded himſelf with ſtrength*. He was ſo far from *drawing back* from the face of Danger, that he *aroſe*, and *ſtood to it*, and bravely *baffl'd* both the *wit* and the *ſtrength* of Satan. But when the *ſame*

Job 1.20.

Job

Job was tempted by the *Allurements of the Flesh*, Then he manifested his *valour*, (like *Fabius Maximus*, or the *Parthians*,) by taking the Courage to use his *Prudence*. And he manifested his *Prudence*, by the *timelinesse* of his *Flight*. He *made a Covenant with his Eyes*, *not to look upon* an Object which might indanger him by *Delight*. It was *then* his chief Wisedom, when (not his *Constancy*, or his *Patience*, but) his *Chastity* was concern'd, not to make trial of his Mastery, in *containing* from a pleasant forbidden Object, but rather wholly to *abstain* from the *Presence* of it. The different way of incountring the different sorts of Temptation, may be collected from the difference, wherewith the *Scripture* doth direct us to deal with the *Devil*, and the *Flesh*. *Resist the Devil*, is the Precept of S. *James*; but *fly Fornication*, is the Caveat of S. *Paul*. For *other Vices* (saith *Anselm* upon that Caveat to the *Corinthians*) are easily *conquerable* by *Conflict*, whereas This of *Fornication* is onely conquerable by *Flight*. Now to *fly* Fornication, is not onely to be *continent*, (which implies a kind of *Combat*, though 'tis not follow'd with *consent*; a being somewhat *affected*, although not *drawn*;) but 'tis *totally to abstain* from all *commerce* with the Temptation.

Job.31.1.

Nunquam fugatur, nisi cum fugitur, nuquam mactatur, nisi cum maceratur, &c. Espensæus *de Contin. Conjug. l.6. c.11. à p.896. ad p.903.*

Jam.4.7. 1 Cor.6.18. *Cum aliis vitiis potest expectari conflictus; hæc autem fugienda est, quia aliter vinci non potest.* Anselmus *in* 1 Cor.6.18. —Καὶ ὁ μὲν πιεστὸς, οἷος μὴ ῥᾳδίως παρὰ τὸν λόγον, ὁ δ' οἷος ῥᾳδίως ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀγεσθαι. Aristot. Eth. *l.7. c.9.*

tion. 'Tis to *defeat* it in ſuch a manner, as King *Edward the Sixth*, and the moſt excellent Biſhop *Wainflet* are ſaid by *Budden* to have *defeated* the *Armed Rebells* under *Jack Cade*, *vel non pugnando*; by *not fighting* with them at all, but onely by *praying* againſt their Wickedneſs. The *total abſtinence* I ſpeak of, is not onely from the *Objects* of Fleſhly Luſt, but from the *Vicinities*, and the *occaſions*, yea from all the very *memories* and *mentions* of them. For ſo *Aquinas* and *Cajetan* do expound S. *Paul*'s Caveat, 1 *Cor.* 6. 18.

§ 10. It follows then that we are likelier to be ſecure from *ſuch dangers* by *timely flight*, than to beat them quite down by a *ſtout Reſiſtance*. And though the *later* muſt be imploy'd when we are actually *ingag'd*, yet to *anticipate* ſuch ingagements, it will be our beſt method to uſe the *former*. For how much ſafer 'tis to *fly*, than to *incounter* ſuch Allurements, (though incounter them we *muſt*, when we *cannot* fly them,) we may illuſtrate by the examples of *Joſeph*, and *Sampſon*, who were as *various* in their *Behaviours*, as they were *different* in their *Succeſs*. *Joſeph fled from his Miſtriſs* by whom he was tempted *day by day*. He was ſo far from *diſcourſing* about the matter in de-

Cætera vitia vincuntur reſiſtendo, ſed Fornicatio fugiendo. i. e. totaliter vitando cogitationes immundas, & quaſlibet occaſiones. Aquinas *in* 1 Cor. 6. 18. *in eundem ſenſum* Cajetanus *ibid. v.* Caſſian. Collat. *l.* 19. §. 16. *Puellæ vel Chriſto reſervatæ amore captus eſt, & ſauciatus Magnus ille* Cyprianus. *Unde? & quomodo? tangunt oculorum faces etiam intangibilia. Nec ſolum captus eſt, ſed & ſollicitavit—— Liberanda de locis periculoſis Navis, ne inter Scopulos frangatur. Eruenda velociter de incendio Sarcina, priuſquam flammis ſuperveni entibus conflagretur. Nemo diu tutus, Periculo Proximus.* Eſpenſæus *ubi ſupra pag.* 900.

ſign,

sign, as that *he would not be with her*, but sprang from her presence, and *got him out*. *Gen.*39. 10. 12. Whereas *Sampson* (on the contrary) was no sooner come to *Gaza*, than *he saw there an Harlot*; nor did he onely *See* but *he went unto her*. (*Judg.*16.1.) Again, no sooner was he come to the Valley of *Soreck*, where he adventur'd to converse with another *Woman*, (v. 4.) but one of the next Things we read of, is *His telling her all his heart*. (v.17.) And the very next to That, is *His sleeping upon her knees*. (v.19) And the consequent of This, *the loss of his Liberty, and his Eyes*. (v.21.) It was not then without reason, That so great and good a Prophet as the Prophet *Elijah*, who had so bravely **withstood* King *Ahab*, did quickly after [a]*fly away* from the Face of *Jezebel*. And that *Abimelech* should have *fled* at the sight of *Sarah*, is very evident even from hence, That no sooner had he *taken* her, than he was fain to *put her away*. (*Gen.*20.3.7.) Nor did he *part* onely with *Her*, but with *a thousand pieces of Silver*, (v.16.) And that in *velamen Oculorum, for a Covering of the Eyes*. And that not onely unto *Her*, but to all that hereafter should *look upon* her, as *Gerundensis*, and *Hamerus* explain the Text. Or (in the *Gloss* of *Tertul-*

* 1 King.18. 18.
[a] *Chap.* 19. v. 3.

V. Munsterum *in Locum &* Cornelium *à Lapide.*

lian,) *for the buying of veils enough*, wherewith to cover both her *own* and her *Maiden's* Beauty; and this to the end they might not eaſily either *See*, or *be Seen* by the other Sex.

§ 11. But I have largely enough explain'd the *moral uſe* of the word *Fleſh*, and what is meant by the *Luſtings* of it, and what it is to *Abſtain* from all Theſe, as well according to the *Object* as *Act* of Luſting, and as well in a *divided* as *compound* Senſe. Beſides that in ſo ſpacious a Field of matter, and ſo fruitfull of meditation, as That I am entring now upon, there will be need of ſome Care that none be *ſurfeited* even with *Abſtinence*. For though an Abſtinence (not from Fleſh, but) from Fleſhly Luſts, is both the *Beſt*, and the moſt *wholeſom*, and the moſt *ſuitable* to the *Seaſon* in its *primitive Uſe*, and (where the Gueſts are all Chriſtian) the moſt *deſirable* Entertainment to be imagin'd, yet a Satiety of the *beſt* things is apt to become the *worſt* Satiety in the world. And therefore rather than exceed the Time allow'd for This Service, I will *begin* and *end* too with That *one* Argument, or Motive, which here is taken from the *Nature*, and perpetual *Employment* of Fleſhly Luſts; which are not onely *no Friends*, but moſt *Implacable Enemies*; nor

nor onely Enemies to our *temporal*, but *æternal* Interest.

§ 12. It is not onely here said, ὅτι μάχονται, *that they fight*, which may imply nothing more than a *Single Battle*; but στρατεύονται, *they war*, which imports a continued *State of fighting*. So far from being capable of a firm and solid *Peace*, that they allow us not a *Truce*, or time to *breath in*. Nor do they terminate their malice upon the *Body*, (for then we needed no more to fear them than Armed Enemies from *without*,) but (which is nearer and dearer to us) στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς, they ever war *against the Soul* too.

§ 13. Thus the *life* of a Christian, as 'tis a *Pilgrimage* of the *Body* from Earth to Earth, (for *Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return*, said God to *Adam*,) and a *Pilgrimage* of the *Soul* from Heaven to Heaven; (for *the Spirit shall return to God that gave it*, saith the Royal *Ecclesiastes*;) so as truly is it a *warfare* of Soul and Body in conjunction, whereof *That* fights for *Heaven*, and *This* for *Hell*; The *former* under *God*'s Banner, and the later under the *Devil*'s. The *Flesh*, and the *Spirit* are so unequally *match'd*, that however nearly *wedded*, they are incessantly *falling out*. Each may say

Militia est vita hominis super Terram. Job 7. 1.

ſay unto the other, *nec poſſum vivere cum te, nec ſine te.* For however *unwilling* they are to *part*, they are *ſeldom* or *never* at *Agreement.*

Rom.7.23. There is a *Law in the members* ſo continually *warring againſt the Law of the mind*, that the *Fleſh* ſtill *luſteth againſt the Spirit*, and *the Spirit againſt the Fleſh.*

* Gal.5.17. And *theſe are* * *contrary the one to the other.* Now 'tis the nature ſtill of Contraries, very earneſtly to indeavour a mutual *overthrow.* And they muſt Both be *well beaten*, *brought down*, and *refracted*, ere they can peaceably *cohabit* under *one* and the ſame *Roof.* Which kind of *Peace* may be effected betwixt *another* ſort of Contraries, (for *Heat* and *Cold* may agree together in a *Lukewarmneſs*, *white* and *black* in *mixt Colours*, *Day* and *Night* in a *Crepuſculum*, however Theſe two laſt are but privatively oppos'd;) but in this moral Contrariety 'twixt the *Spirit* and the *Fleſh*, it never can be; the reaſon is, becauſe when the Spirt is moſt indulgently *at Peace* with the *Fleſh*, the *Fleſh* is *then* the moſt *dangerous* and *fatal* Enemy to the *Spirit.* Exactly ſuch an Enemy, as *Joab* was to *Abner*, when *he took him aſide, and ſlew him* **peaceably.* Or as the very ſame *Joab* to Captain *Amaſa*, when he *ſaluted* him as a *Brother*, inquir'd after his *health*

* 2 Sam. 3. 27.

as

as a kind *Physician*, offer'd to *kiss* him as a Dear *Friend*, that so he might *civilly* and *sweetly* smite him under the *fifth Rib*. Or as the two *Sons of Rimmon to Righteous Ishbosheth*, when making *as if they would fetch some Wheat*, they kill'd him *slylie in his own House*, and quietly *resting upon his Bed*. Or as *Judeth* to *Olofernes*, when she *pleas'd* him into Destruction, and *maliciously* made him in love with her Conversation; when she *ravish'd* him with her Beauty, that she might *kill* him with the fruit of his *kindness* to her; stole his *Heart* whilst he was *waking*, that whilst he *slept* she might take his *Head* too. And exactly *such* an Enemy is the *Flesh* unto the *Spirit*, when the *Spirit* gives *no disturbance*, but dwells in *quietness* with the *Flesh*. For *then* the *Lusts* of the *Flesh* do give the *Spirit* such *wounds* as it *cannot feel*. Wounds indued with such a numming, *Narcotick* Quality, as *hurts* the Spirit *without offense*, and by *killing* it very *pleasantly*, sends it *insensibly* to *Hell*. Nor are any whit the *less*, but the more *certainly* destroy'd, for being laid into a sleep by an over-great Dose of *Opium*. Hence those πόλεμοι Ἀόρατοι, *invisible Wars*, and *indiscernable Insurrections*, from which the antient Greek Liturgies were wont to pray for a

2 Sam. 20. 9, 10.

Chap. 4. v. 6. 11.

Judeth 12. 14, 16, 18. & *Ch. 13. 8.*

Παῦσον πολέμους Ἀοράτους τοὺ ἐμὲ πολεμοῦντας.

Ceſſation. For when the *Soul* is ſo *degenerate* as even to *doat* upon the *Body*, Then does the *Body* with moſt advantage *inſenſibly war* againſt the *Soul*. The treacherous *Luſts* of the *Fleſh*, (like the treacherous Aſſaſſinates of *Oloſernes* and *Iſhboſheth*,) aſſault the *Spirit in its own Houſe*, and (which is the worſt of all Supercherie) as they find it faſt *aſleep* in the *Bed* of *Carnal Security*. Nor is it onely *not awak'd* by the *Blows* they give it, but it rather *ſleeps* the *faſter* for being *ſtruck*, (juſt as if it were ſtruck by the Rod of *Hermes*.) That when at laſt it ſhall awake, either in This, or *another* World, it may not be to *eſcape*, but to *ſee* its Ruin.

§ 14. So that the *War* I now ſpeak of, is *more* than *Civil* or *Domeſtick*. For *there* we war againſt *others*, but *here*, againſt our *own ſelves*. A *Man's Enemies* (ſaith the Prophet) *are thoſe of his own Houſe*. And indeed the *greateſt* Enemies, excepting thoſe of his *own Heart*. *This* eſpecially being the *Field*, wherein the *Luſts* of the *Fleſh* do ſtill *incamp* againſt the *Spirit*, and give it *Battle*; and ſtrive to bring it into *Captivity* to the *Law of Sin*. And becauſe the *whole Man* does conſiſt of theſe two, *Fleſh* and *Spirit*, *Body* and *Soul*, *matter* and *form*, as eſſential Parts of his *Compoſition*, it cannot

Mic. 7. 6.

cannot but follow that we *our selves* are incessantly warring against *our selves*. To wit, *our selves*, as we are *Animals*, against *our selves*, as we are *Men*. Our selves, as we are *Men*, against our selves, as we are *Christians*. Our selves, as we are *Carnal*, against our selves, as we are *Spiritual*. Again it follows, that we our selves are the *greatest* Enemies to our selves, because we *arm* our vile *Members* against our *Mind*. (For what our English Translation does call the *Instruments*, is in S. *Paul*'s own language, *the Armour of unrighteousness*.) And by the help of this Armour, we Arm our base *Appetites* against our *Wills*; and our brutish *Affections* against our *Reasons*. We use our selves as unmercifully, as *Samson*'s Enemies did *Him*. We strive to pluck out our inward *Eyes*, and to *deliver* our selves *bound* to Sin, and Satan. We side with the *old* man against the *new*; Abet the *outward* man in us against the *inward*; are such *Enemies* to our selves, as to *despoil* our selves of *Grace*, whereby (as much as in us lies, and without Repentance,) we make our selves *incapable* of *Bliss* and *Glory*.

'Ὅπλα ἀδικίας. Rom. 6. 13.

§ 15. But when I speak of a *War* between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, I do not mean onely the *visible* and *gross* Body of *Flesh*, which of it self

is but *paſſive*, and *cannot fight*. No 'tis the *animated* Fleſh, the Fleſh that is capable of *Luſting*; It is a fleſhlineſs of *Spirit*, and a carnality of *Reaſon*, which is *arm'd* with a *Wiſedom* fetch'd up from *Hell*, and ſtands in hoſtile oppoſition to that which cometh down from *Heaven*, *Jam* 3.14,15,16. And accordingly when God had upbraided *Iſrael*, with their being a *fooliſh and ſottiſh People*, and *void of all underſtanding*, he gave the reaſon of it in this, *That they were wiſe to do evil.* (*Jer.*4.22.) Obſerve the pithy Brevity of That Expreſſion, *Becauſe* they were Wiſe, they were therefore Fooliſh. Their Wiſedom did not onely *conſiſt with* Folly, but in That *ſort* of *Wiſedom* their Folly and Sottiſhneſs did *conſiſt*. This is that *Wiſedom of the Fleſh, which exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God.* 2 *Cor.*10.5. It is an *Earthy*, *Senſual*, *Deviliſh wiſdom*, as God Himſelf by his Apoſtle is pleas'd to call it. And 'tis with very great reaſon he calls it *Deviliſh*; becauſe the *Luſt* of the Fleſh, which is its *Wiſedom*, is a direct *Devil within us*; as having a faculty to *intice us*, and *to draw us quite away* from fighting under *Chriſt*'s *Banner*. Therefore 'tis that *Luſt* and *Satan* have the very ſame Character in holy Scripture. *A man is tempted* (ſaith S.*James*)

Jam.1.14.

S. *James*) *when drawn away of his own Lust and inticed.* More than which cannot be said of the *Devil himself*; who cannot *drive* us by *force* into any Sin, but onely *draw* us by *Flattery*, or *morally* drive us by *panick Fears*. Now the very *same Warrier*, which sometimes is call'd by the name of *Flesh*, is elsewhere termed the *carnal Mind*; which is as much as to say, *the fleshly Spirit*. *The carnal Mind* (saith S. *Paul*) *is enmity against God, for it is not subject to his Law, nor indeed can it be.* It is so *naturally* a *Rebel*, that it can never be any other, so long as it remaineth a *carnal Mind*. A very *natural* thing it is for the Son of the *Bond-woman*, even in *Abraham's own house*, to hate and persecute the Son of the *free*. And even in *Abraham's own Person*, it was as *natural* for the *Flesh* to war against the *Spirit*. *Esau* kick'd against *Jacob*, whilst both were yet in their Mother's Womb. And even *Jacob himself*, although as *peaceable* as he was *plain*, had yet a Law in his Members, as it were *lifting up the heel* against the Law in his Mind. The *best* of Men are but *Men*, and therefore at their *best* will still be subject to *Corruption*. Some *Canaanites* will be left in the *holiest Land*. S. *Paul* himself had *fears and fightings*, as well *within* as *without*.

{Gal. 5. 17. Rom. 8. 7.

And notwithſtanding his *Abundance*, as well of *Grace*, as of *Revelations*, he had *a thorn in the Fleſh*, which did exceedingly *terrifie* and *wound* his *Spirit*. Nor was *David* more afflicted by envious *Saul*, than his *inward* man was vexed by the hoſtilities of the *outward*. When our *Spirits* are *moſt willing* to do the will of our Lord, we are forced to complain that our *Fleſh* is *weak*; and in that very *weakneſs* does one of its *chiefeſt ſtrengths* lie. Even then when we can ſay, *Lord we believe*, we have great reaſon to add, *help thou our unbelief*. Let the *Fleſh* (like the *Thief*, I mean the unconverted Thief on our Saviour's Croſs,) be *bound up* and *Crucified*, yet (like the very ſame Thief) it will continue to *reſiſt*, or *revile* the Spirit. As when the Taylor in the *Apologue* had ſtopt the *mouth* of his *ſcolding Wife*, She was able ſtill to *rail* with her *finger's ends*. An *Apologue* not ſo *light*, as the *moral* of it is *grave* and *ſerious*. For the Spirit and the Fleſh are (in *Ariſtotle*'s Compariſon) as the ὁ ἀνὴρ and the τὸ θῆλυ, i. e. as the *Husband* and the *Wife*; and ſo the moral of the Apologue may be affirmed to be This. Whilſt Fleſhly Luſts have a Being, are unmortified and alive, let *congruous* Grace do what it can, (ſo long as it is not *irreſiſtible*,) there will be Hoſtilities againſt

against the Spirit. For were it possible for the *Flesh* to *cease* from *warring* against the *Spirit*, a Man might possibly be *innocent* on this Side Heaven. Which because he cannot be, *the Carnal mind* by sound Consequence must needs be at *enmity with God*. Hence it is that *Rank Atheists* are very commonly *Rank Wits* too, full of Artifices and Tricks, very *skilfull to destroy* Themselves and others. And 'tis an *Enmity* so much the *worse*, even because it is *Spiritual*, as well as *Carnal*, or (to use S. *Paul*'s language) *a Carnal mind*. For the *Spirit of a man*, which by nature *goeth upwards*, when like the **Spirit of a beast*, it tendeth *downwards*, quite against its own nature, and as it were clings unto the *Earth* by being *Carnal*, it is not onely a *strong*, but a *subtil* Enemy. It wageth *war* against the *Soul*, that is, *itself*, as well by *stratagem*, as by *force*. It is a *Treacherous*, *cologuing*, **deceiptfull* Thing. And though it seems to be but one of those *three Brigades* whereof the Devil's *whole Army* is said by S. *John* to be compos'd, (the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life,) yet has it all the *lower World* to serve for its *Armory* or *Magazin*; Profit, and Pleasure, and Pomps, and Vanities, Beauty, and Honour, and Strength, and Greatness, and (to express

* Eccles. 3. 21.

* Heb. 3 13.

expreſs it in a word) All the *Darts* of the *Fleſh* which it does *ſhoot* (after the meaſure that the Devil gives Aim,) againſt the *Spirit*, are commonly drawn out of *that* one *Quiver*, that is to ſay, *the Carnal mind.*

§ 16. Since then our Enemies are *ſuch*, as have been deſcrib'd; ſo *ſtrongly*, ſo *ſubtilly*, ſo *inceſſantly* warring againſt the Soul, (A *Soul* adorn'd with *God's Image*, and indu'd with his *Spirit*, and redeem'd with his *Blood*, and ſuſtein'd with his *Grace*, and in a capacity of his *Glory*,) our very *Dangers* may ſerve for *Orators*, to incourage and incite us in our *Encounters.* And our *Dangers* are to be meaſur'd by the precíouſneſs of the *Subject*, or *Prize* we fight for. And *this* is here expreſſed to be *the* Soul. That's the *Helena* πεμμάχητον, or μῆλον ἔριδος, the *Ball* or *Apple* of *contention*, thrown as 'twere *between us*, and our *Fleſhly Luſts*; We aſſerting it to *God*, and They to *Satan*; We contending for its *Safety*, and They contriving its *Deſtruction.* Now ſo infinite is the difference between the values to be put upon *Souls* and *Bodies*, that He who **rejoyced* in thoſe *Afflictions* which did but war againſt the *Body*, did *groan* and *tremble* under the *Luſts*, which ſtill did *war* againſt his *Soul.* And in compariſon of the *hurt*, which may

Anima, Dei inſignita Imagine, decorata Similitudine, deſponſata Fide, dotata Spiritu, redempta Sanguine, deputata cum Angelis, capax Beatitudinis, hæres Bonitatis, Rationis particeps, quid tibi cum Carne unde iſta pateris? Bernard. *de Animâ. c.* 3. *p.* 1051.

* Rom. 5. 3. Philip. 2. 17. Rom. 7. 24.

may happen unto the *Soul*, we *are forbidden to fear them that can kill the Body.* For what is the *Body*, in its original, but *Dust* and *Ashes?* what, at the *best* of its Consistence, but a fair *Nursery* of *Diseases?* And what, when *parted* from the Soul, but the *food of Worms?* whereas the *Soul* is That *Spouse, which God hath betrothed to himself*, Hos. 2. 19, 20. Not a *Citizen* onely of *Heaven*, but *Heaven it self*; as S. *Gregory* and S. *Bernard* are pleas'd to call her. And therefore if the *Warriers* or *Fleshly Lusts* I now speak of, do *fight* against our *immortal Souls*, it concerns us as much as our *Souls* are worth, to *war against*, by *abstaining* from *Fleshly Lusts*; By which if ever we are *conquer'd*, we are *undone.* As being *dead whilst we live*, (to use S. *Paul*'s Oxumoron) and (which is a great deal sadder) as being to *live* when we are *dead too*, although it be onely to *die for ever*, or rather to be *for ever dying.* These are some of those *foolish and hurtfull Lusts*, which *drown the Soul in misery and perdition.* They transform the *whole man* into a State of *Brutality.* They cast us out of his presence, in whose *presence is life*, and *at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.* For when 'tis said by the Apostle, That *if we live after the Flesh, we shall die*; his meaning

Liquidò colligere debemus, quia si Deus Sapientia, Anima autem Justi Sedes sapientiæ, dum Cœlum dicitur Sedes Dei, Anima Justi ergo est Cœlum. Greg. Mag. *in* Evang. Homil. 38. T. 2. *p.* 133, 134. *Vide etiam* Bernard. *super* Cantica, *Serm.* 27. *p.* 646.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

Rom. 8. 13.

ing cannot but be This, *That we ſhall certainly be damn'd.* For They that *live after the* Spirit muſt die the *firſt Death*, and Therefore *This* other muſt needs me meant of the *Second.* Thus our *Dangers* do incourage us in our Encounters.

§ 17. Another Incouragement which we injoy whilſt we are proſecuting our *War* againſt *Fleſhly Luſts*, lies in the *Goodneſs*, and the *Nobleneſs*, and (as the conſequence of Both) in the *Pleaſure* of it. For what can be *better* in *it ſelf*, than to *ſide* with the *Spirit* againſt the *Fleſh?* with the *Rational* part in us againſt the *Brutal?* what more *honourable*, or *noble*, than to win a *Victory over our ſelves?* It was not near ſo great a Glory to the Young man of *Macedon* to have brought into Subjection *all* the *Provinces* of *Aſia*, as it had been to have ſubdued at once his *Avarice* and his *Ambition.* For 'tis not the *greatneſs* of the *Conqueſt*, but the *goodneſs* of the *fight*, which yields an *happineſs* to the *Victor*, and ſolid *glory* to his *ſucceſs.* When *Paul* was *ready to be offer'd*, and at the Approach of his *Departure*, his chiefeſt *Comfort* and *Honour* ſtood both in *This*, That *he had fought the good fight, that he had finiſhed his Courſe, and had kept the Faith:* that he had proſperouſly *ingaged* againſt *Fleſhly Luſts*, which, however they had *warred*, had

2 Tim. 4. 6,7.

had *not prevailed* against his Soul. Many are worsted in their Warfare, for want of distinguishing (as they ought) between the *Acts* and the *Effects* of their *Self-denials*. 'Tis true the *Act* of *Self-denial* will affect the *best* of us with *pain* or *trouble*; but how much more will it *delight* us by our Injoyment of its *Effects*? (as the drawing of a Tooth is painfull and troublesom for a moment, although in order to perfect ease.) We know the *Soul* is the *life*, and so the *happiness* of the *Body*, as *God* himself is both the *happiness* and the *life* of the *Soul*. And as there is no *greater pleasure*, than that which affects the very *Soul* of a Pious man, (for 'tis a Proverbial Antimetabole, and in every man's mouth, that the Pleasure of the Soul is the Soul of Pleasure,) so the *Pleasure* of the *Soul* can hardly be *greater*, or *more refin'd*, than in *despising* and *rejecting* the grosser *Pleasures* of the *Body*. Nor need we fear that *such* a *Pleasure* is not attainable at all, because it does not *grow up*, like a worthless *Mushrom*, in a night; but rather (like the goodly Rose) requires a certain Tract of Time to give it *Ripeness*. For a Left-handed *Conscience*, like a Left-handed *Man*, by *abstaining* long enough from the *use* of the *Left*, and by *continuing* long enough the *use*

and *practice* of the *Right*, will perform the ſame Actions with *eaſe* and *pleaſure*, which at preſent may be *difficult*, and *painfull* to him. *Habitual Sickneſſes* of *Soul* being like to thoſe *inveterate diſeaſes of the Body*, which cannot poſſibly be cur'd by *one* or *two Taſts* of a Noble Med'cin, but muſt ſubmit to whole *Methods* and *Courſes* of it. Many *Sciences* and *Arts* are extremely *tedious* to ſuch as are but *new beginners* and *learners* in them; which yet will yield them the greateſt *Comfort*, *Content*, and *Pleaſure*, as ſoon as *Uſe* and *Underſtanding* hath bred a very good *Acquaintance* and *Friendſhip* with them. Will any Man who is not *mad*, *break off* the *finger* of his *Watch* as an uſeleſs Thing, becauſe he cannot *perceive* it *moving?* or leave off the *practice* of a generous *abſtinence* from his *Debauches*, becauſe his very *firſt Indeavours* of *Self-denial* and *Pious life* are not ſo *pleaſant* or ſo *eaſie*, as he expected? let him have *patience*, and That *Finger* will moſt *apparently*, though *inſenſibly*, make a progreſs from *this*, to *another* hour. So let him ſtay his *due time*, and his *practice* of *Reformation* will paſs from *difficult* to *eaſie*, from *eaſie* to *uſefull* and *familiar*, from *familiar* to *delightfull* and joyous alſo. Let a *vitious* man get but the *knack* of *Virtue*, (which without *Cuſtom* he cannot

cannot have,) and he will *wonder* how he could *once* have been *pleas*'d with *Vice*. But he who ſtays 'till it is *pleaſant* to *leave* his groſs *pleaſures*, will *never leave* them; becauſe the pleaſure of *leaving ſuch*, cannot *begin* 'till they are *left*. From whence it follows, that He who will not be perſwaded to *perſevere* in *abſtaining from Fleſhly Luſts*, until his *Abſtinence* is *eaſie*, and *pleaſant* to him, is like the natural Fool of *Greece*, whom *Hierocles* in his ἀστεῖα does merrily call his *Athenian Scholar*, who determin'd within Himſelf *never to go into the Water*, until (before hand) he might be ſure that he could *Swim*. Or like the overwary Meſſenger (of whom we read in the *Spaniſh* Story) who having been threaten'd under a Pœnalty by him that ſent him, not to return without an Anſwer, would not part with his Letter to the Perſon to whom 'twas ſent, until he might firſt have an *Anſwer* to it. For a man not to abſtain from Fleſhly Luſt till he finds it pleaſant, is juſt as ſenſleſs, and as abſurd, as for a man to be impatient of ever *learning* the uſe of *Books*, 'till he can *read* and *underſtand* them with *eaſe* and *pleaſure*; or to grumble at the labour of taking a *Pencil* into his hand, until he finds he can uſe it like ſome *Apelles*. If there is any man that

hears me, who is conſcious to himſelf of ſo great a Folly, I have no more to beg of him than barely This; That he will not come with *Præjudice* to the *Amendment* of his *Life*, (as the *Iſraelites* did to the *Land* of *Promiſe*, in fear of *Anakims* and *Lions* to be incounter'd in the way,) and that he will not diſtruſt a vertuous courſe 'till he has *try'd* it. That he will *weigh* Vice and Virtue in *equal Scales*, before he *cleaves* unto the *Firſt*, or *rejects* the *Second*. That he will have ſo much *Juſtice* both for *God* and *Himſelf*, as to make an eſſay, whether a *Cuſtomary Abſtinence from Fleſhly Luſts*, will not yield him more pleaſure than all his *Cuſtomary Injoyments* have ever done. That he will once have the courage to make a *Trial* of *new obedience*, (I mean an *incorrupt* and *impartial* Trial.) And that being once *ingag'd* in the practice of it, he will not poorly *ſtart back* at its firſt *uncouthneſs*; (for *difficilia quæ pulchra*, the goodlieſt things in their Injoyment are ever difficult in their acquiſt;) but that imitating the Bravery of *Caleb* and *Joſua*, he will deferr to make a *Judgement* or *final Æſtimate* of the Thing, 'till he has had a Sound *proof* and *experience* of it. For if the *Savour* and the *Taſt* he ſhall have of *Virtue*, be but as *much*, and as *long*, as his

Taſt

Tast of *Vice*, he will sooner swallow the *Stings* and the *Gall* of *Asps*, than vouchsafe the *licking up* of his nauseous *Vomit*.

§ 18. But besides *this* Incouragement (which of it self is very great) from the *Fight it self*, (a fight for *God* against *Satan*, and for the *Interest* of the *Soul* against *Fleshly Lusts*,) there is a *Third* arising to us from the consideration of our *support*. For 'tis the powerfull *Spirit of God*, *which helpeth our Infirmities*. Yea, when our Infirmities are so potent, as to disable us even from *praying*, and from *crying out* for *help*, the Spirit *interceedeth for us with Groans which cannot be uttered*. And at the *intercession* of *such* a *Spirit*, our Spiritual Enemies will *fly*, as the *walls* of *Jericho* did *fall* at the *sound* of a *Trumpet*. 'Twas by the help of This *Spirit*, that though *the Enemies of David were still in hand to swallow him up*, yet he was able still to say, *He would not fear what Flesh could do unto him*. Whilst the *weapons of our warfare are not Carnal*, *but Spiritual*, *They are mighty*, *through God*, *to the pulling down of strong Holds*; *casting down Imaginations*, *and every high thing that exalteth it self against God*, *and bringing into captivity every Thought to the obedience of Christ*. Our weapons indeed are *mighty*, but 'tis *through God*,

Rom. 8. 26.

Psal. 56. 2, 4.

God, who does not onely *guide* our *Feet*, but alſo *lifts* up our *Hands*, and *directs* our *Blows*, and often *ſtrikes* for us *Himſelf* too. And yet the *Victory* which he *wins*, his Goodneſs placeth to our *Accompt*. His is the *Glory* of the Conqueſt, but Ours the *Comfort*. And This accordingly was the Incouragement our Saviour gave to his Apoſtles, *Be of good Comfort, I have overcome the World*. The Sting of Death, which is Sin, *He* hath pluck'd out for us. The ſtrength of Sin, which is the Law, *He* hath weaken'd in our behalf. *He* hath *routed* our common Enemy, and looks that *We* ſhould *follow* the *chaſe*. Which the Apoſtle well conſidering, did ſeem (with one and the ſame Breath,) to turn his *out-cry* into an *Eulogy*, his *complaint* into a *Jubily*, his *Temptations* of *Deſpair* into *Joy* and *Triumph*. For no ſooner had he ſaid, *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* But in the next words he added, *I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*. Nay farther yet; He does not onely ſay in another place, *Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; But alſo invents a *new Word*, to ſhew the *greatneſs* of *our* Victory above that of *others*; *Through Him that loved us*, ὑπερνικῶμεν (ſays the Text) we

Joh. 16. *ult.*

Rom. 7. 24.

we do not onely *overcome*, but *are more than Conquerors*. Indeed without *Him* our ſtrength is weakneſs, our Wiſedom Folly; and accordingly the Apoſtle does very appoſitely exhort us, *to be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of His might*. *Eph.*6.10. And when 'tis ſaid by S. *John*, *Ye are of God, little Children, and have overcome them*, he gives this Reaſon, *Becauſe greater is He that is in You, than he that is in the World*. For whatſoever *is born of God overcometh the World*; and *this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith*. 1 *Joh.*5.4. This muſt therefore be our Prayer, *That Chriſt may dwell in our Hearts by Faith*. And this will *then* be our Incouragement, That *being ſtrengthned with might in the Inward man, we* ſhall be able *to ſtand in the evil Day*.

Rom.8.37.

1 Joh.2.14.

Eph.3.17.

Ver. 16.

§ 19. But we have yet another Incouragement, to *wreſtle with* and to fight againſt *Fleſhly Luſts*, from the exceeding great *Richneſs* of our *Reward*. For when we can ſay with the Apoſtle, *we have fought the good fight*, we may alſo ſay with him in the ſame Aſſurance, becauſe upon the ſame Ground, *Henceforth is laid up for us a Crown of Righteouſneſs*. Betwixt which two there is ſo vaſt a Diſproportion that the *Fight* is for a *moment*, and the *Sufferings* growing

2 Tim.4.8.

from it do quickly *wither*; whereas the *Crown* is *immarceſcible*, ſuch as cannot but injoy an eternal Spring. And therefore S. *Paul* vvas not *out* in his *Reckoning*, vvhen he *reckon'd that the Sufferings* (and amongſt Them the *Self-denials*) *of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us.* *Rom.*8. 18. Which kind of Sufferings and Self-denials do not onely *præcede*, but even *work* for us a weight of Glory. 2 *Cor.*4.17. And the reaſon of This expreſſion may be argued even from hence, That to *fight againſt* the *Fleſh*, ſo far forth as to *mortifie, and put it to Death*, (which are the literal importance of the Apoſtles two words, νεκρῶν, & θανατοῦν,) is to make our ſelves *Partakers of the ſufferings of Chriſt.* Which *ſufferings of Chriſt*, do not onely *occaſion*, but clearly *work* for us a weight of Glory. And for this very *end* do we *partake of Chriſt's ſufferings*, (by Self-denials on his Accompt,) *That when his Glory ſhall be revealed, we may alſo rejoyce with exceeding Joy.* 1 *Pet.*4.13. Yea the bare *conſideration* of ſuch an unſpeakable *Reward*, did put S. *Paul* upon *Rejoycing*, not onely *after*, but *in his Sufferings* and Self-denials. *Col.* 1.24. A Reward great enough to make a *Coward* turn *Fighter*. For who would not *fight* even for *fear*,

A Bold expreſſion I confeſs, but 'tis S. *Paul's*, 2 Cor.4.17.

Col.3.5. Rom.8.13.

fear, that he shall *lose* such a Reward? The onely thing we have to fear, is our *not fighting enough* to win the Prize we fight for. Now *every Fighter* (says our Apostle, and so say all Agonistick Writers,) is to keep a strict *Diet*. S. *Paul*'s words are, *He must be* **temperate in all Things*. Alluding plainly to the *Olympicks*, in which the *Combatans* were *dieted* for *forty Days*. Every Man had his *Lent*, whereby to *fit* him for his *Encounter*; and his *Abstinence* was his *Armour*, whereby to *guard* him from a *Defeat*. And if *They* were so *Abstemious*, to gain a *corruptible Crown*, how much more should *we abstain*, for the gaining of a Crown which is not liable to corruption? not onely an *exceeding*, but an *æternal* weight of Glory? Such was the Logick with which S. *Paul* argued, and such was the Rule of his *Acting* too. For (saith He) *I so run, not as uncertainly*; *So fight I, not as one that beateth the Air. But I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection.* His own words are, ὑπωπιάζω, & δουλαγωγῶ. I fight as a *Pancratiast*, (that is,) as a *Cuffer*, and *Wrestler* too. I beat my Body *black and blue?* I make an arrant *Slave* of it; lay upon it both the *Yoke* and the *Cross* of *Christ*; subdue my *Flesh* unto my *Spirit*; deny my self the use of

* 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Ver. 26, 27.

my Chriſtian Liberty; *ſuffer* the *loſs* of many things which I might *lawfully injoy*; that by any means I may attain to the Reſurrection of the Dead, that by any means poſſible I may *apprehend That*, for which I am alſo *apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus*. All which I take to be imported by thoſe *two words*, 1 *Cor.*9.27. Where by the way we may obſerve of our Apoſtle S. *Paul*, He did not war againſt *Another's*, but againſt *his own Body*. For he knew *his own Body* was the worſt *Enemy* to his *Soul*; and that to ſave himſelf from *it*, was *to keep it under*. He knew the *Fleſh* to be ſo *ſturdy*, and ſo *implacable* a Rebel, that if he ſhould ſuffer it to *thrive*, and to *get an Head*, he would have reaſon to be *jealous* of its *Aſpirings*; and to ſtand in ſome fear, *leſt whilſt he preached unto others*, *He himſelf might become a Caſtaway*.

§ 20. Now we muſt go, and do likewiſe. For we expect the ſame *Crown*, and are beſet with the ſame Enemies, by which if *he* was indanger'd, much more are *we*. And therefore if it was *His* way, much more muſt it be *Ours*, to *abſtain* in good earneſt from *Fleſhly Luſts*, by *abſtaining* from the *things* by which they are *nouriſhed* and *upheld*. *Intemperance* is the *Mother* of all the reſt, or if not properly the *Mother*,

ther, yet at leaſt ſhe is the *Nurſe*, as being evermore *feeding*, and making *proviſion* for the Fleſh, and by conſequence giving *ſtrength* to its ſeveral *Luſts*. And therefore *ſtriving for the Maſtery*, let us be *temperate in all things*. Let us add *Faſting* unto our *Prayers*, and conſtant *Watchfulneſs* unto our *Faſting*, and *perſevere* in all *Three*, till we have *crucified* the *Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts*. For ſince our *Luſts* are ſo *reſtleſs* as never ceaſing to *rebell*, we muſt be every whit as *reſtleſs* in reducing ſuch Rebels to their Allegiance. Nay it concerns us to be reſtleſs, though they ſhould poſſibly be at *reſt*. For as a *Leopard*, or a *Lion*, though ſometimes *gentle*, and *debonaire*, are yet with reaſon *kept cloſe*, in *Chains*, or *Dungeons*, becauſe they ſtill retain the *nature* of *ſalvage Beaſts*; ſo *Fleſhly Luſts*, though very much *tamer* at one Seaſon, than at another, do yet retain the whole *nature* of *Fleſhly Luſts*, and if they are not lock'd up in *Chains*, or thruſt down into a *Dungeon*, we know not how ſoon they may *rage* againſt us. However then our Fleſhly Luſts may Seem to be at peace with us, let us never be at peace with our Fleſhly Luſts. And though the *vileneſs* of our *Enemies*, or the *miſeries* of a *Defeat*, the Honour and *Gallantry*

of our *Ingagement*, or the *Divinity* of our *Support*, (by the Grace of God, and the Means of Grace,) ſhould not be able *of themſelves* to prevail upon us, yet the additional conſideration of the *Immenſity* of our *Reward*, ſhould (one would think) beget within us the nobleſt courage and reſolution. We find them both in one Text, and ſpoken both with one Breath, and the later is an Inference which cannot but follow from the former, That whoſoever will but

1 Tim. 6. 12. *fight the good fight of Faith*, will not fail *to lay hold on Eternal life.*

And this the God of all Mercy prepare us for, both for the Glory of his Grace, and for the Worthineſs of his Son, unto whom with the Father in the unity of the Spirit, be all Obedience and Thankſgiving for ever and ever. *Amen.*

OF

OF ABSTAINING

In particular from

DISOBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

In things INDIFFERENT,

As from the *worſt* and the *moſt ſcandalous* of all FLESHLY LUSTS, in S. *Peter's Judgment.*

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1 PET. 2. 13.

Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's ſake.

§ 1. SAint *Peter* having exhorted us *to abſtain from Fleſhly Luſts which war againſt the Soul*, and inforc'd his Exhortation with Five ſtrong Reaſons, (in the two next Verſes

Verſes before my Text,) ſtraight gives an Inſtance in the moſt *ſcandalous* and the moſt *damning* piece of *Carnality*, of all thoſe ſorts in general from which he *exhorted* us to *abſtain*. For what *Connexion* or *Coherence* can there be betwixt my preſent and former Text, (lying as *cloſe* by one another, as by S. *Peter* they could be laid,) unleſs it be that *Diſobedience* to human Governours and Laws, is of all *Fleſhly Luſts* the moſt *diſgracefull* to *Chriſtianity*, the moſt *repugnant* to the *Goſpel* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, moſt *incompatible* with the *Profeſſion* and the *Salvation* of a *Chriſtian*? That *this* is the meaning of S. *Peter*, ſeems to be clear from the word ὃν, very ſignificant in the Original, however omitted in the Tranſlation. To ſtop the Mouths of thoſe Enemies *who ſpeak againſt you as evil Doers*, (ſays S. *Peter* to the Chriſtians of the Διασπορᾶς, to whom he writes,) by your *abſtaining from Fleſhly Luſts*, and by your *unblameable Converſation among the Gentiles*, ὑποτάγητε, *be ye ſubjected*, and ὑποτάγητε ὃν, be ye *Therefore* ſubjected; and πάσῃ κτίσει ἀνθρωπίνῃ, *to every human Creature*, that is to ſay, to *every Man who is a Magiſtrate*, created by *God* (not by the *People*) to be a *Governour*. But ſtill a *Creature*, and a *Man*, and (Both together) an *human*

human Creature; wholly *mortal*, as to his *Person*; though wholly *divine*, as to his *Office*. Therefore to *Him submit your selves*, διὰ τὸν κύριον, not for the *Magistrates* or the *People's*, or *your own* sakes onely, but first and chiefly *for the Lord's*. First, because of the Lord's *Precept*, *Matth.*22.21. Next, because of the Lord's *Example*, *Matth.*17.27. Thirdly, because of the Lord's *Ordaining* him, *Rom.*13.1,2. Fourthly, because He bears the Lord's Image, and is the Lord's *Deputy*, *Lieutenant*, or *Vicegerent* upon Earth, the Lord's *Minister*, and *Avenger*, *Rom.*13.4. Lastly, because ye must *love* the Lord, (v.5.) and love the Lord ye cannot, unless ye love the Lord's Surrogate, and your love to *Superiours* is to be seen in your *Obedience*.

Again, submit your selves *without partiality*, (πάσῃ, is the Apostle's word,) to *every* Ordinance of Man, or to *All* the Lord's Surrogates without exception. Not onely to the *Supreme*, as sent by *God*'s Providence, and *God*'s Commission; but to *subordinate* Rulers also, as sent by Commission from the *Supreme*. Not to the *Emperour* onely *Himself*, (whether *Claudius*, or *Nero*, at the writing of this Epistle,) but to *Proconsuls*, and *Procurators*, both of

Aſia, and *Bithynia*, as ſent by *Cæſar*. Yet not to Them, *againſt* Him; not to *Furius Camillus Scribonianus*, againſt *Claudius*: not to the Parliament, *againſt* the King; nor to the *King*, againſt *Himſelf*; not at all to his *Authority*, againſt his *Perſon*; nor in his *Right*, to his *Wrong*; (as ſome *Chriſtians* have plaid the Sophiſters to the reproach of *Chriſtianity*;) But to *each* in his *order*. To the *King*, *as Supreme*; (ſo it follows in the Text,) and to *Governours*, *as ſent by Him*. Where the word *as* is very emphatical. *As*, and *no otherwiſe*, than as *by Him ſent*. *As*, and *no otherwiſe*, than *for His ſake*, and on *His accompt*. And ſo, *à quatenus ad omne optimè valet argumentum*. Submit your ſelves to *All*, as ſent by Him; and ſubmit your ſelves to *None*, but ſo far forth as *He ſends* them. S. *Peter*'s Logick is very plain, and makes the Caſe very clear upon every ſide.

§ 2. Of all the *Arguments* or *Reaſons* which are producible for the *inforcing* S. *Peter*'s Præcept, here are *two* of concernment to Men *in general*, and a Third for *Believers*, or *Chriſtian* People in *particular*. Of the two former, the *firſt* is taken from the *Author* and *Aſſertor* of All Authorities, unto which Men as Men are here commanded to *ſubmit*. They muſt do it *propter*

ter Dominum, because *The Lord* hath *Authorized* human Authorities upon Earth, and *The Lord* will *defend* or *avenge* them All. The *second* is taken from the *End* of the divine *Constitution* of Human *Authorities* in the World. To wit, an equal *Distribution* both of *Punishments*, and *Rewards*. Those to *Evil-Doers*, and These to *Them that do well*. (v. 14.) By which Distribution of which two things is procured the *Peace* and *Quiet*, and by consequence the *Happiness* of human life. The *Third* and *special* Argument, touching us *meerly* as we are *Christians*, is taken from the *Credit* of *Jesus Christ* and *His Gospel*, which *We* who are *Christians* are highly obliged to assert. And assert it we cannot by any one Argument so well, as by *submitting our selves* impartially *to every Ordinance of Man*. By making it appear to the *Jews* and *Heathens*, that the *Gospel* or *Law of Christ* obliges its Subjects *to live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty*. That *Christianity* is a Religion, either *reviving* or *introducing love* and *loyalty* and *order* and *Tranquillity* into the World. That *Obedience* to the *Authority* of human *Laws* and *Legislators*, is one of the *Prime Characteristicks* whereby a *Christian* is to be *known*. That the *best* Chri-

ſtians are ſtill the *loyal'ſt*. That the more we love and fear the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, the more we *ſubmit for the Lord's ſake to every Ordinance of Man*. And that They who do *otherwiſe*, are but *Titular* Chriſtians; *not at all* Chriſtians, but in *Profeſſion*; none of *Chriſt's* Followers, but in *Repute*. And therefore *Chriſtianity* muſt not be *eſtimated* by *Them*, who are *Rebels* to the *Goſpel* of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Nor muſt *We* who are *The Lord's*, by ſubmitting our ſelves *for the Lord's ſake*, be meaſur'd by *Them* who are *none of Us*, but *Diſorderly Walkers* out of the High way to Heaven, from whom S. *Paul* bids us *withdraw our ſelves*; and whom S. *John* bids us *not receive into our Houſes*, *nor bid them God ſpeed*; and that for the *Credit* of the *Goſpel*, which (but for this Prophylactick) *They* would bring into *Diſgrace*.

§ 3. This Third and laſt and ſpecial Argument of S. *Peter*, drawn from the *Credit* of *Chriſtianity*, for the inforcing of our *Submiſſion to every Ordinance of Man*, thereby meaning our *Obedience to human Laws and Legiſlators*, is of ſo great a value with him, and ſo peculiar to us as Chriſtians, that He urges This *Twice* in a little room; immediately *before*, and immediately *after* my preſent Text. Firſt, our Loyalty and Obe-

Obedience, and all other honest Conversation must be made known unto The *Gentiles*, that *they who speak against us as Evil-doers may by our good works which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of Visitation.* (v.12.) Next, *it is the will of God, that with* such our *well-doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish Men.* (v.15.) This is an Argument which S. *Paul* does urge often, whereby to make men *afraid* and *asham'd* of Vice. *Through you* (says He unto the Christians who dwelt at *Rome*) *the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles.* Rom.2 24. For the unbelieving Gentiles do judge by your *Practice* of your *Profession*; by the *Blemishes* of your *lives* who are called *Christians*, they grow *averse* to *Christianity*; and have no good opinion of *Christ himself* whom you worship, because they guess that your *Religion* has so very *ill* an *influence* upon your *Lives*. So again argues S. *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke* (either under Heathen Masters, or amongst Heathen Men) *count their Masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his Doctrine be not blasphemed.* 1 Tim.6.1. For when *Servants* are *refractory*, or *Subjects rebellious*, although they are such to *Heathen Masters* or *Magistrates*, they draw *disgrace* upon the

Goſpel, and tempt the *Infidels* to *believe* that men are the *worſe* for being *Chriſtians*; that the *Doctrine* of *Chriſt* is corruptive of *Principles*, as well as *Manners*; and *Chriſtian Liberty* but a *Cloak* for *rebellious Practice*. Now to antidote this Venom, and to wipe off this Diſparagement, as well from the *Doctrine*, as from the *Name* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, S. *Paul* commands *Timothy* to be *earneſt* and *often* in preaching *Obedience* and *Submiſſion* to all *Superiours*; eſteeming Theſe the *weightier* things of the Chriſtian Law. And
Ver. 2. therefore *Theſe things Teach and Exhort*, (ſays He to *Timothy with an Emphaſis*,) as being Things moſt *eſſential*, not onely to the ſaving of *Chriſtian's Souls*, but *eſſential* to the *ſaving* of *Chriſtianity it ſelf*, and to the ſaving of our Saviour from being *blaſphemed among the Gentiles*. And for as much as *no Obedience* can be more naturally or politically, or religiouſly due from one Mortal unto another, than from *Wives to their own Husbands*, S. *Paul* does therefore preſs *Titus* to preach up *This* alſo for *This*
Tit. 2. 5. great *End*, *that the Word of God be not blaſphemed*. That *Chriſtian Religion* may not ſuffer by their Enemies taking notice of their *unchriſtian* diſobedience to thoſe *above* them. That *Jews* or *Gentiles* may not ſuſpect any *ill*

Iſſues

Issues or *Infusions* of *Christian Principles*, as if they were *exclusive* of *moral Virtue*; and that Inferiours either *were*, or that they *might* be the *worse* for their being *Christians*. Lastly, since *Masters* are a kind of *Domestick Magistrates*, to whom *Obedience* also is *due* by the same *divine Right*, (and no sturdy Servant will ever make a good Subject,) *Servants* therefore must be urged to be *Obedient to their own Masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again*, for This Great Reason, *that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; and *that he who is of the contrary part may be asham'd, having no evil thing to say of them.* Ver. 8, 9, 10.

§ 4. From All which ways of Argumentation put together, I conceive my self qualified to make these profitable Conclusions. That *Obedience* and *Submission* to *every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*, whether *Supreme*, or *Subordinate* by his Commission, does make the *most* (of *all Duties*) for the *Ornament* and Honour of *Christianity*. That *Disobedience* and *Resistance* do make the most for its *Disgrace*. That the Doctrine of Obedience to publick Parents, both *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical*, is more *authenticated* and *taught* by *Jesus Christ* and his *Apostles* through-

throughout the *Goſpel*, than by all other Syſtems, Codes, or Pandects, by all other *Bodies*, Collections, or Conſtitutions of *Religion*, or *Philoſophy*, throughout the World. From all which things it ſeems to follow, that they who call themſelves *Chriſtians*, and yet are Authors or Fomenters of Schiſms and Factions, (ſuch induſtrious *Embroilers* of Church and State, by ſowing the Seeds of diſcontentment and of diſſatisfaction in People's Minds, as if they long'd to be fiſhing in Troubl'd Waters and to be *licking up again* thoſe publick *Spoils* and *Revenues*, which they were forced to *diſgorge* in the Great Year of *Reſtitution*,) They (I ſay) who thus act, and yet do call themſelves *Chriſtians*, are the greateſt *Antichriſtians*, the greateſt *Adverſaries* of *Chriſt*, and the greateſt *underminers* of *Chriſtianity*, which *He* can poſſibly ſet on Work who was *a Murtherer from the Beginning*. Can any Man wonder at the *ſpreading* of *Irreligion* and *Atheiſm*, more *ſince the Year* 41, than *ever before* in our *Memories*, and perhaps in our *Readings* too? (unleſs I may except the Days of *Hildebrand*, when *Hell* is ſaid to have *broken looſe?*) One accompt of it is plain and obvious: The horrideſt Rebellion under Heaven (from after the Year 41) having been managed by

by *Christians*, made the *name odious ever since*. Insomuch that some *Blasphemers* have dar'd to say, (not That *old* and *common* word onely, *sit Anima mea cum Philosophis*, but as the effect of a greater hatred,) *They would not indure going to heaven, if they thought they should meet with such Christians There.* Which, though the language of the most *stupid* and *thick-headed* Sinners, who can no better *distinguish* 'twixt *Words* and *Things*, or 'twixt the *Picture* and the *Life*, or 'twixt the *Vizard* and the true *Face*, or 'twixt the *Actor* and the *Man*, or 'twixt the Use and the Abuse of the best things that can be nam'd, or last of all, betwixt a *Nominal* and *Real* Christian; should yet be sufficient to *deter* such as are *Christians* at least *in Wish*, from giving *occasion* for the future to *such Aversions*. If the *Enemies of Christ* would but read over our Gospel, and well consider it, they would be juster and more ingenuous, than to look upon *Rebels* and *Mutineers*, in Christian Kingdoms and Commonwealths, as truly *Christians*. But rather would guess that *out of Malice* they wear the *Profession* of *Christianity*, to make it *odious*; on purpose to *bring* it into *disgrace*; and (as much as in them lies) to make us all *asham'd* of it. Though God be thanked we are so far

from being *aſham'd of the Goſpel of Chriſt*, or *aſham'd* of our *Affliction* in the *Goſpel's* being
Jam.2.7. *abus'd*, and in The Adverſaries *Blaſpheming that worthy Name, by which* 'tis our Happineſs
* Act.5.41. and our Privilege *to be called*, that *we* **rejoyce to be thought worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Chriſt's ſake*. Yea 'tis our Καύχημα, Such Diſgrace is
a Rom.5.3. *our Boaſting*; and we [a] *glory* in Tribulations. Yea one ſtep farther S. *Paul* advances; we do ſo *glory* in our *diſparagement* which we *ſuffer* for our *Submiſſion to every Ordinance of man upon Chriſt's accompt*, or in Obedience to his Doctrine, or for *the Lord's ſake*, (as S. *Peter* ſpeaks,) that *we glory in Nothing elſe. God*
Gal.6.14. *forbid that we ſhould Glory* (ſays S. *Paul* to the *Galatians*) *ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom the World is crucified unto us, and we unto the World.*

§ 5. But what I ſpeak laſt is but Occaſional, and may be reckon'd as a Parentheſis, ſhewing *All* are not ſtagger'd or wavering in the Faith, though *many* are. And indeed they *are ſo many* whom the *Schiſms* and *Rebellions* of men *profeſſing Chriſtianity* have made to *waver*, if there are not *many more* whom they have made to *fall off*; There are *ſo many* who do *ſuſpect* the Chriſtian Name in them that *wear* it as *a cloak of Maliciouſneſs*,

ciousneſs (which S. *Peter* provides againſt in the 16th. Verſe of this Chapter,) and *ſo many* who do *deteſt* it for being ſo *worn*; that if ever there can be *any*, *This* is certainly the Time, wherein the People are to be preſs'd to *obey* their *Governours*. God I mean in the *firſt* place, and human Authority in the *ſecond*. And *This* as really in the *ſecond*, as that *other* in the *firſt*, becauſe our *Obedience* to the *firſt* does clearly *depend* (for its Completion) upon our Obedience to the *ſecond*. Men ſhould be made to underſtand, by perſpicuous and frequent and cogent reaſonings, how the *whole* of our *Religion* may be eaſily wound up into theſe two *Bottoms*; our *adæquate Obedience to God and Man*. To the *Royal Law* of *Chriſt*, and to the *Laws* of the *Nation* wherein we live; whether thoſe Laws are *Eccleſiaſtical*, or *Civil*. Theſe two are the *Meaſures* we may warrantably take of *our ſelves*, and *others*. Theſe two are the *Touchſtones* by which we *all* are to be *try'd*. Not the one without the other. There is no *fearing God*, without *honouring the King*, nor *vice versâ*. Our *Obedience* to *God* is a thing *impoſſible*, without a ſuitable *Obedience* to his *Vicegerents*; whether the *King* as *Supreme*, or other Governours *Subordinate*. Theſe commiſſioned by *Him*, as

He by *God*. Not onely *Scripture*, and *Reaſon*, but long *Experience*, and *Obſervation*, have made me look on *Theſe two* as things which are *never* to be *parted*, either in *Practice*, or in *Diſcourſe*. Without *Theſe two*, *all* the *reſt* are worth *nothing*. And neither of Theſe alone can be ſincere without the other. *My Son* (ſays *Solomon*) *fear the Lord and the King, and meddle not with Them that are given to change.* Either fear them *Both*, or *Neither*; though each in his Order; The *Lord* for his *own* ſake, and therefore *Firſt*; The *King* for the *Lord*'s ſake, and therefore *Second*. But *meddle not* with *Them*, whoſe *evil communication* may *corrupt* thy *good manners*; and therefore *meddle not* with *Them* that are *given to change*, who do *neither* fear God, *nor* honour the King; and accordingly are *weigh'd* in the *oppoſite Scale* of the Wiſe man's *Ballance*. The People muſt not onely be *told* now and then *upon the By*, but muſt *purpoſely* be *taught*, nor muſt they *ceaſe* from being taught until *convinc'd* of this *union*, [The *fear of God and of the King, Obedience to Divine and to human Laws,*] as *eſſential* to our *Preſent* and *Future* Safety.

Prov. 24 21.

§ 6. When I inquire into the Reaſons, why amongſt a *World* of *Chriſtians* there is ſo little of *Chriſtianity*; and why the *Proteſtants*

testants themselves divide as much from one another, as they *all* do from the *Church* of *Rome*, which is as much as from the *Jews* or the *Turks* themselves, (for they will no more communicate with the one than with the other, although in most *Fundamentals* they All *agree*,) *This*, amongst several *other* reasons, appears to me to be the *chief*, that there is one thing *Essential* to the *Christian Religion*, and by consequence to the *Salvation* of all men's *Souls*, which, however a *Fundamental*, is not yet so well *known*, or not so heartily *believ'd*, or not so seriously *consider'd*, and *laid to heart*, nor so duly *preached up*, as it ought to be. For if it were, there could not be so many *Schisms* and *Separations* here in *England*, as now there are. There could not be by any means such *Inclinations* to *Rebellion*, such *Oppositions* of *Authority*, and such *Contempt* of *human Laws*, (whether Civil or Ecclesiastical,) as now we see there are daily; and are rather in a *likelihood* to grow *worse and worse*, than in any present *Hope* of a sound *Amendment*. Now the *Truth* which is *Essential* to our *Christian Religion*, and to the *saving* of our *Souls*, (which I conceive to be so seldom either *known*, or *believ'd*, or sufficiently *Consider'd*, or *Taught as such*,) is plainly

This: [That the Duties of the Firſt Table, cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt without the Duties of the Second. That Obedience to God, does ever include and carry with it a ſtrict Obedience unto our Governours. That human Laws (where e're the matter of them is lawfull) are the Laws of God too. And that for this cogent irreſiſtible reaſon, (which I have ſeveral times urged, and think I can never urge it enough,) becauſe commanded by that Authority which God has commanded us to obey.]

§ 7. Shall I *exemplifie* and *illuſtrate* what I ſay by plain Scripture on either ſide? God *forbids* us by *Moſes to worſhip Idols.* And He *bids* us, by S. *Peter, ſubmit our ſelves to every Ordinance of man.* Again, He *bids* us, by S. *Paul,* Heb.13.17. *Obey them that have the Rule over us.* Now is not God's Law as *binding* in what he *bids*, as in what he *forbids* his peculiar People? I know the former binds *Semper*, and the later *ad Semper.* But *when* they Both bind, they cannot but bind with an *Æquality.* Or is not his peremptory *Command* as obliging under the *Goſpel*, as it was under the *Law?* Is not the *Meſſage* of God as *good*, when diſpatch'd to us *Chriſtians* by S. *Peter*, and S. *Paul*, and by *Chriſt himſelf*, as when ſent unto the *Jews* by a ſingle *Moſes?*

Is

Is not *God* the same *Jehova* to *Them* and *Us?* and his *Word* as *authentick* in these *last* Times, as in the *First?* Why then do not *Christians* make it a matter of as much *Conscience*, to *obey* the Laws of *Men* whom God has *commanded* them to *obey*, as *not* to *worship* a *graven Image*, which God has *commanded* them *not to worship?* That *Each* is *equally* God's Command, was *never* deny'd by *any* Christian, nor ever *can* be. And is not His *Command* that we do a *Good* thing, as valid as his *Command* that we *abstain* from what is *evil?* Yea, 'tis as much a Christian's Duty, *to obey his lawfull Governours*, and by consequence their *Laws Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, as it is, *not to worship a graven Image.* The *first* is as conducible to our Salvation as the *second.* And *Damnation* is as much *threatened* to the Breach of the *one*, as the *other* Precept.

§ 8. Now in my slender judgement, (and such as it is, 'tis the best I have,) there can be no likelier way, whereby to win over our *weak and dissenting Brethren* from the ways of Separation they have espous'd, than that of labouring to convince them by all good means, from the Pulpit, and from the Pew, and in the privacy of the Closet, by publick Preaching, and Catechizing, and private Conferences especially,

ly (which we ſhall find to be ever the moſt effectual,) that (ſaving the *Dignity* and *Priority* of the *firſt and great Commandment*, as the Ground and Foundation of all the reſt,) our *Obedience* to our *Governours*, and human Laws in force amongſt us, is as really an *eſſential* or *Fundamental* of *Chriſtianity*, and of as abſolute *Neceſſity* to our *Salvation*, as *the Belief of one God*, or any other that can be nam'd. It being as rigidly commanded by God in Scripture, under the very ſame *Promiſes* of *Reward* if we *obey*, and under the very ſame *Threats* of *endleſs Puniſhment* if we *rebel*. 'Tis not enough that This Doctrine be like *the Homily of the Church againſt Rebellion*, which is commanded by Law and Canon to be read once a year in every Pariſh; nor is it enough that it be preached up of courſe *upon the Thirtieth of January*, and the *Fifth of November*; But 'tis of abſolute neceſſity to be riveted and ingrain'd, firſt of all into the *Heads*, and after That, into the *Hearts* of People committed to our charge, that *they muſt needs be Subject*, (that is, Obedient) to human Magiſtrates and Laws, not onely for *fear* of the Magiſtrates *Wrath*, or for *hope* of worldly *Profit*, no nor onely for *fear* of *Hell*, or for *hope* of *Heaven*, but (as S. *Paul* goes on to tell

tell us) *for Conscience sake.* I say, for *Conscience* towards God, and for *Conscience* towards our selves, because 'tis *part* of the *Law* of *Nature*, and *simply Good* in it self: not consequentially, (as every *positive* Law is) but *antecedently* obliging, and without any the least relation to God's particular written Law, (so often repeated in the Scriptures,) though *This* does make our *Disobedience* to be the more unexcusable, and the Person disobeying fit for *the greater Condemnation.* I know the *Custom* of Disobedience, and the great *Numbers* of the *Refractary*, and their *Impunity thereupon*, and the *seemingly-good morals* of some *Dissenters*, and their giving out themselves for the *Godly Party*, (These five Fallacies put together) have bred an opinion in many *weak* and *unwary* Christians, that they *need not* be *subject* to the *Higher Powers* upon Earth, though S. *Paul* says *they Need*, *Rom.* 13.5. That *the Powers* spoken of are *not the Ordinance of God*, though S. *Paul* says *they are.* (v.1,2.) That they may *not submit to every Ordinance of Man*, though S. *Peter* says *they must.* (1 *Pet.* 2.13.) And so they imagin that it consists with a *Godly life*, to slight the *Authority* of their *Governours*, and scorn their *Laws*, unless when their *Governours* and their *Laws*

Matth. 23. 14.

are to *protect* Them and Theirs, both in their *Livelihoods* and their *Lives*, from *fraud and violence*. (in which *one* caſe, they will readily *ſubmit to every Ordinance of man*, though not for the *Lord's ſake*, as S. *Peter* would have it, yet for *their own*.) In a word, they think it lawfull, *to live in Schiſm*, if not in *Sacrilege*; (ſtill in *Sacrilege* where they are *able*;) and ſo to *tear in pieces*, not the *Seamleſs Coat* onely, but the Body of *Chriſt* crucified in a myſtical ſenſe.

§ 9. To frame an *Amulet* in proportion to the *Contagion* of this *Diſeaſe*, wherewith a world of eaſie Souls of *catching* Complexions have been *infected*, I humbly conceive it may be made of theſe Six *Ingredients*.

Firſt, that no *Form of Godlineſs* can be other than *Phariſaical*, which is not attended with *common Honeſty*.

Next, that none can be truly *honeſt*, who do not *render* to *All* their *Dues*. Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour. (*Rom.* 13. 7.)

Thirdly, that nothing can be more due from any *one* to any *other*, than from the *Subject* to the *Soveraign*, and *all* in *Authority under Him*.

To

To wit, the *Tribute* of *Obedience*, as well as *Money*; the *active Custom* of *Conformity*, as well as *passive Subjection* to Laws in force; and as well to *Those* Laws which tend to the *publick Peace* and *Safety*, as those others which maintain us in the *private injoyment of our Estates*; The *Fear* of *offending*, as well as of *suffering* for our *Offences*; lastly, the *Honour* of *inward Reverence*, as well as of *outward Complaisance*. Not as *Men-pleasers*, but as the *Servants of Christ*.

Fourthly, that a *Dishoneſt* man is *ipso facto* and *eo ipso* an *ungodly* man; and *Disobedience* to the *Fifth Precept*, as bad as *Rebellion* against the *seventh* or the *eighth*, or rather *worse*; And so *a Common Nonconformist* to Laws establish'd, is (to speak within compass) as *Scandalous* in his *life* as *a Common Drunkard*.

Fifthly, that such a *Subject* as will no longer *allow* the *Laws*, than the *Laws* allow *Him* in his being *lawless*, or no longer than they are *usefull* and *pleasant* to him, (as when they avenge him upon his Enemies, protect him in his Liberty, and assert him in his Estate,) deserves not those Benefits of Propriety and safety the Laws afford him.

Sixthly, that as many as do avow themselves

Proteſtants, and yet *divide* from the *Church of England*, do contribute a great deal more towards the *bringing in* of *Popery*, than *All* the *Emiſſaries* of *Rome* could have done *without* them.

§ 10. If we earneſtly deſire (at leaſt as much as in us lies) to put an end to all *Schiſms* and *Separations*; to procure or promote the publick *Peace* of this Nation, and (in That) the publick *Safety*, by procuring and promoting *Uniformity in Religion*, and a general *Conformity* to the Laws we live under; we muſt be reſtleſs in convincing all the People we can converſe with of theſe *Six things*. Not onely by making them *unable* to *deny*, but by making them *able* to *aſſert* the Truth of them, and thereby to be Converters of other men. We muſt never be at reſt, nor let Them be ſo, until they are *perfect* in theſe Particulars. Or if not in *all*, yet eſpecially in the *chief*. As, that though the Laws of God cannot poſſibly *depend* on the Laws of Men, (but *vice versâ*,) yet our *Obedience* to God's own Laws does *depend* on our *Obedience* to Thoſe of Men. They onely differ by the Diſtinction of *mediate* and immediate. And ſo they are *Termini Convertibiles*; for the *immediate* Laws of *Men* are the *mediate* Laws of *God*.

God. And that by force of This Text (never enough to be repeated, and chew'd upon,) *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake.* And why *for the Lord's sake*, if not because *the Lord* hath *so appointed?* What God does *mediately* command by his several *Deputies*, his *Moses*, and his *Aaron*, his *Zerubbabel*, and his *Joshua*, and all his *succeeding Legislators* in Church and State, He does as *really*, and as *truly*, and as *bindingly* command, as what He *immediately* commands *by a Voice from Heaven.* In so much that the *Distinction* of *mediate* and *immediate* does no ways *alter* the *Obligation*, or make God's Law either more or less *His.* Now though *the Doctrine* of *Obedience* unto the *mediate* Commands of God, is very learnedly, and piously, and frequently preach'd in many Places, yet it has not universally its wish'd effect, because not preach'd as a *Fundamental*, as *essential* to our *Religion*, and as of *absolute Necessity* to the *Salvation* of the *Soul.* The Doctrine cannot be press'd *enough*, until 'tis press'd in *This Notion.* For *Liberty* is so *sweet*, and *Obligation* so *distastfull* to most mens *Palates*, that they will never make Conscience of being *punctually Obedient* to *human Ordinances* and *Laws*, whilst they are

flatter'd that their *Souls* may be *ſav'd without it.*

§ 11. Touching the ſeveral Ways and Means whereby This Work is to be done, I am plainly of This opinion. That though it may be *well* done from out the *Pulpit*, in ſuch profitable Diſcourſes as we commonly call *Sermons*; yet very much *better* it may be done out of the *Pew*, in the more *primitive* way of Preaching, and the more *profitable*, I think, which is *Catechizing*. But *beſt* of all by *private Conference*, wherein we deal with our *Diſſenters one by one*; and give them the reaſonable Advantage (which in the publick they cannot have) of *alledging* all they can for their Separation, and of *objecting* all they can againſt our Church from which they ſeparate, and by conſequence againſt the 33 Acts of Parliament by which our Liturgy and Church do remain eſtabliſh'd. For This Advantage given to *Them* by a Private Conference, gives *Us* alſo the Advantage of giving *clear* and *full Anſwers* to their Objections. Which if we do to their *Satisfaction*, we ſhall gain them back to *God*, and to *His Spouſe* (our Dear Mother) *The Church of England*. This we certainly ſhall do, if their *Error* is but of *Weakneſs*, and ſo conſiſtent with an *honeſt well meaning*

ing Spirit; whereas if of *Wilfulness*, *Pride*, and *Stomach*, Then indeed they are possess'd with such a Deaf and Dumb Spirit, as of which (without a *Miracle*) we are not able to *dispossess* them. And so we may lawfully give them over as *incurable* Patients on whom *All Remedies* are *cast* away. (As we may lawfully *cease to cast* that which is holy unto Dogs.) For in good Earnest, of the two, I do esteem it a *lesser* Miracle, to make the *Blind* man to *see*, or the *Deaf* to *hear*, than either the *Wilfull* to *believe*, or the *Obstinate* to *submit* to the *clearest Reason*. The onely *Charity* left for *Such*, *is to deliver them up to Satan*; I will not say for the *Destruction*, but *Humiliation* of the Flesh; that so (if by any means possible) *their Spirits may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*. 1 Cor. 5. 5.

§ 12. If what I have said is not sufficient to reach the end I aim at, I will try what success I may happen to obtain by a shorter Method; The Method of *Marcus Æmilius Scaurus*, a very Noble Roman of known Integrity. Who being accused before the People in a very *long* Oration by *Varius Sucronensis* an *envious Knave*, defended himself in a very *short* one; or (to say truly) in *None at all*. For disdaining to contend

tend with his baſe Enemy in words, He onely ask'd the *Roman People* this Queſtion. *Which of the Two (ye men of Rome) think ye the worthier of your Belief? Varius Sucronenſis, who does confidently affirm Æmilius Scaurus to be Guilty? or Æmilius Scaurus rather, who does proteſt that he is Innocent?* Upon which words alone the Perſon accuſed was *acquitted*; and the Envious Accuſer ſeverely *cenſur'd.*

In a manner not unlike I ſhall onely ſay Here. The great Apoſtle S. *Peter*, as the Holy Ghoſt's Penman, bids us all *ſubmit our ſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's ſake. Whether to the King, as Supreme; or unto Governours, as ſent by Him.* But *certain men* of theſe Times, *crept in unawares*, who *deſpiſe Dominion, and ſpeak evil of Dignities*, who think themſelves of more knowledge and greater Authority than S. *Peter*, do as abſolutely *forbid*, as S. *Peter bids* us. They will not have us *ſubmit* to *any* Ordinance of *Man*, either *Subordinate*, or *Supreme.* But they will have us (*for the Lord's ſake*) to *recalcitrate* rather, and *kick*, at every Ordinance of Man, as incroaching too much on our *Chriſtian Liberty.* Now if I ask *which* of the Two, (S. *Peter*,

ter, or His Enemies,) we ought to follow, or obey; very confident I am, ye will say S. *Peter*.

These (I think) are words enough to have been us'd at This Time, upon the grounds I have to hope that *No more are needfull*.

A CAVEAT

Touching the Danger of

REFUSING

THOSE

CAVEATS

Our LORD hath given us in His

GOSPEL.

HEB. 12. 25.

See that ye Refuse not Him that speaketh. For if They escaped not who refused Him that spake on Earth, much more shall not We escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven.

§ 1. AS it hath frequently been said of the *Laws of England*, They are so *many*, and so *good*, that there needs but *one*

more, for the putting of the *rest* into *Execution*; so I may say with like reason of *Sermons* too; They are so every where *enough*, in case they are *enough heeded*, that there needs but *one more*, for the procuring to the *rest a kind and hospitable Reception*. For without such a Reception, 'twere better for us that our Sermons were not *fewer* onely, but *worse* too. My reason is, because the *more*, and the more *powerfull* our *Teaching* is, by so much the more our *Non-Proficiency* must needs be render'd *Inexcusable*. Regular *Preaching* was ever reckon'd amongst the *means of Salvation*. And by the *means of Salvation* whosoever is not *better'd*, must needs be *worse*. Not to go *forwards*, is to go *backwards*, in the *School* of *Christ*; And when the *Gospel* is not admitted but to our *outward Ears* onely, it cannot be but as a *Milstone* about our *Necks* too. For as 'twas said by old *Simeon* of *Christ Himself*, That he is certainly for the *Fall*, where he is not for the *Rising of many in Israel*; so the *Preaching* of *Christ*, if we *profit not* by it, will accidentally be imploy'd unto our *greater Damnation*.

Luk.2.34.

Mat.23.14. Mar.12.40.

§ 2. Now considering this duly, with one thing more, That as *Creeds* have *multiplied*, True *Believers* have *decreas'd*; That as *Christian Professors*

Professors do grow more *numerous*, *Christianity it self* doth seem to *lessen*; And that the *Multitude* of *Religions* hath been in some Danger to *thrust* Religion *out of the World*, (the *Spirit* of *God* being of *Unity*, and *not* of *Division*, whereas the *Devils* name is *Legion*, *for they are many*,) I say considering all This, both in the *Causes* and the *Effects*, and that the Time is long since come, wherein Professors of Christianity will *not indure sound Doctrine*, but having proud and *Itching Ears* do *heap up Teachers to themselves*, such as *make* for their *Palate*, and *hit* their *Fancy*, (which very Teachers cannot *please* them one minute *longer*, than whilst they *speak pleasant Things*, and only *prophecy Deceipt*,) and that of *all* our *Epidemical* or *National Sins*, none is likelier to provoke or pull down *National Calamities*, than a general *slighting* and *contempt* of the *Messages* of *God* in the *Mouths* of *Men*; I think it will not be impertinent to press that Caveat upon our selves, which God's *inspir'd Amanuensis* did inculcate somewhat *often* on *his* Disciples, (a Caveat which *deserves* and *bespeaks* an Audience, and which does not onely *invite*, but also *threaten* us into *Attention*,) *See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake*

Eph. 4. 3, 4. Mar. 5. 9.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

on Earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven.

§ 3. The Text consider'd in the gross, is *a rowzing* Warning, or Alarm. And being taken in the retail, it hath Three general parts. First, the *matter* of the Warning, which though but *negatively expres'd* by a bare [*not refusing him that speaketh,*] yet sure it cannot but be *imply'd*, that we *must give a great Attention to the excellent Things that are spoken by him.* Secondly, the *Persons*, who (above all *other* Persons) are *most concern'd*; and These are imply'd in the Pronoun *Ye*. Ye that are *Christians* of the *Hebrews*, as having *heard* and *imbraced* the *Faith* of *Christ*, βλέπετε μή ποτε ὑμεῖς, See that *Ye* do not refuse. See that *Ye* be not debauch'd by whatsoever sollicitations of *Jews* or *Gnosticks*. Thirdly, the *Argument*, or *Ground*, by which the Warning is *inforced* and *urged on*; and *This* again is *twofold.* First the *Experience* of *greater Mercies* than had been shewn unto the *Jews*; Next, the *Sequel* of *greater Judgments*, in case those *Mercies* shall be *abus'd.* The *greater Mercies* are very evident from the *comparison* in the Text. *They* were spoken to by *Moses*, but *We* by *Christ.* * *Moses* was faithfull in all his house

* Heb. 3. 5.

houſe as a *Servant*, but *Chriſt* as a *Son*. *Moſes* ſpake to *Them* on *Earth*, but *Chriſt* does ſpeak to *Us* from *Heaven*. And that the *Judgments* muſt be *greater* in caſe the *Mercies* ſhall be *abus'd*, is juſt as evident from the *Reaſon* on which the Text is here *built*. For *Ingratitude* is a *Sin* the moſt *provoking* to be *imagin'd*. And This receiving its *aggravation* from the *number* and *weight* of foregoing *Favours*, infers our Judge ſo much the *fiercer* in being *revenged* upon our *Sins*, the more *indearing* obligations we *Sin againſt*. For if *they* eſcaped not who refuſed *Him* that ſpake on *Earth*, much more ſhall not *we*, if we turn away from *Him* that ſpeaketh from *Heaven*.

Having thus view'd the Text in its ſeveral *parts*, let us obſerve the *Propoſitions* which are deducible from the *whole*.

Firſt, as *Men* (in the general) above all other *Creatures*, ſo *Chriſtians* (in particular) above all other *Men*, are not onely *not to refuſe*, but to *imbrace*, and *adore* Him that ſpeaketh to them from Heaven. We muſt not onely be *contemplative*, but *practical* Hearers of the Word.

Secondly, Chriſtians are not *excuſable* for their Apoſtacies or Neglects, by the *greateſt* *Tempta-*

Temptations to be imagin'd. But the greater Temptations they meet withall, the greater *use* they are to make of their *Ghostly strength*, and the more to *illustrate* their *Christian Courage*. For

Thirdly, the *more* we do *injoy* the glorious *Privileges* of Christians, the *more obnoxious* we are to *consuming Fire*, (in the last Verse of this Chapter,) on a supposal that we be found to be *dry*, and *fruitless*, and so *combustible matter* for it.

Lastly, *not to give Attention* to the Word of God speaking, *not to love* and *entertain it* with *Faith* and *Fear*, does pass with *Him* for a flat *Refusal*. For παραιτεῖν is to *reject with an Aversation*; it is the word S. *Paul* useth, when he exhorts his Son *Timothy* to *refuse Prophane and old Wives Fables*. And the *opposite* Thing to it is περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, to *give an earnest heed* unto the words which we have heard. (*Heb.* 2. 1.) Betwixt which two because we see not any *medium*, βλέπετε τότῳ μᾶλλον, *See* the rather *that ye refuse not him that speaketh*.

1 Tim. 4. 7.

The *third* of these Propositions is an *Inforcement* of the *first*, and must be therefore treated of in conjunction with it. But yet since it is not the *sole Inforcement*, (nor indeed should be the

the *chief*, were we men of more *ingenuous* and *generous* Natures,) it will be fit to introduce it with ſome few *others*, and ſuch as are apteſt to prevail with men of the *nobleſt Diſpoſitions*.

Now there are *four* things eſpecially, (all ariſing out of the Text,) by which this *Warning* may be inforced. To wit, the *Quality* of the *Speaker*, the *Nature* of what is *ſpoken*, the *Condition* of the *Perſons* to whom he *ſpeaks*, and the *Inevitable Deſtruction* to ſuch as are guilty of a *Refuſal*.

§ 4. Firſt conſider *who* it is that ſpeaks unto us in the Goſpel. 'Tis *He that ſitteth between the Cherubims, and covereth himſelf with Light, as with a Garment. He that inhabiteth Eternity, and dwelleth in that Light which no mortal Eye can approach unto.* He of whom 'tis therefore ſaid by the royal Pſalmiſt, *that Clouds and Darkneſs are round about him, though righteouſneſs and judgment are the Habitation of his Seat.* He that *ſtretcheth out the Heavens*, and *layeth the Foundations of the earth*, and *formeth the Spirit of man within him.* He that *guards* us with his *Angels*, and that *guides* us by his *Spirit*. He that protects us by his *Providence*, and *directs* us by his *Grace*, and that *orders* all he does to *crown* us finally with his *Glory*. In a

word, 'tis *God the Father*, that speaks unto us in the Gospel by *God the Son*. And therefore for *this*, if for *no other* reason, *so that ye refuse not Him that speaketh*, because he *speaketh* in the language of *unspeakable Love*, and *unspeakable Humility*. For when as yet we lay *weltring* and *polluted in our Bloud*, how did he *save* us as so many *Brands pluck'd out of the Burning?* how very gladly did he descend from out the *Bosom of the Father*, to bid us *Live?* 'Twas He that descended to be *born*, to make himself capable of *dying*. 'Twas He that *died for our sins*, to become capable of *rising* for our *Justification*. 'Twas He that *rose*, and *ascended*, *and sat him down on the right hand of the Throne of Majesty on high*, That there he might *make Intercession* for us; That by the *Gifts* of his *Apostles* whom he *inspir'd* for that *end*, he might cause his holy *Gospel* to be still *Echoing* in our *Ears*; and that by sending his *Holy Spirit* at once to *sanctifie* and *instruct* us, he might place it as a *Signet* upon our *Hearts* too. From whence it follows unavoidably, That if we *miss* of those things which have thus been prepared and purchas'd for us, and shall finally *come short of the glory of God*, we cannot say unto *God*, that *He* hath withheld his good things from us; but

Heb. 1. 3.

God

God may rather say to *us*, as heretofore to his People *Israel*, *Your Iniquities have turned away these things, and your Sins have withholden good things from you.* 'Tis onely the *hardness* of our *Hearts*, and the *Spirit within*, which hardens every thing else that is *without* us. 'Tis *That* that many times makes *the Heavens Brass over our heads, and the Earth Iron under our feet.* 'Tis very certain that on *God*'s part, *nothing* has been wanting to make us *happy*. He *came* to this end, that we might *receive* him. He *spake* to this end, that we might *hear* him. Was *lifted up* to this end, that he might *draw us up* after him. And *draws us up* to this end, that he may *seat* us with himself at the *right hand of God*. And if our *hearts* are now such *heavy*, such *unweildy* pieces of *Iron*, or have a mixture of so much *Lead* in their composition, as not to be lifted above the Earth by so strong a *Loadstone*, it does not argue a want on *Christ*'s part, of enough *Magnetick Virtue* whereby to *draw* us, but onely a *wilfulness* on *ours*, whereby we gain an *Incapacity* of being *drawn*.

Jer. 5. 25.

Deut. 28. 23.

Now for the better overcoming this brutish *fleshliness* of our *Spirits*, let us repeat and reinforce the Consideration we are upon. *God* the *Father* speaks to us, by *God* the *Son*, what is

written by the *Suggestion* of *God* the *Holy Ghost*. There is *nothing* of *Human* in all the Gospel, besides the *labour* of the *Evangelists*, in committing it to Posterity with *Ink* and *Parchment*, which yet was done by the Conduct of *God himself*. 'Tis true the *Law* was of *God* too, but *That* came by **Moses*; whereas the *Gospel* came from him by *Jesus Christ*. *Christ* was *sent* and [a] *commission'd* by *God* the *Father*, as the *Apostles* were *commission'd* and *sent* by *Christ*. For so he told them at that Instant when he gave them their *Mission* and their *Commission*, (*Joh.*20.21.) *As my Father sent Me, so send I You.* From whence he is called by S. *Paul*, not onely *the high Priest*, but *the Apostle of our Profession*, *Heb.*3.1. All the *Twelve* were but *Apostles* of this *one great Apostle*, as well to *offer* us the Terms of *Peace* and *Pardon*, as to *intreat* and *implore* our *Acceptance* of it. Now when *God* sends *Himself* in a Message to us; when the *Heavens* are bowed down to imbrace the *Earth*; when even *Happiness it self* is brought to *visit* us at our *Houses*, (which at present are but *floating* in a *Valley of Tears*;) and brought by *Him* who is the *Author* of *Bliss* and *Glory*; whose Dwelling is not onely *in*, but *above* the Heavens; to whom the *Sun* in his Zenith is but a *Shadow*,

* Joh.1.17.

a Joh.14.10.

Joh.14.10. Joh.20.21.

Shadow, and the whole Globe of *Earth* but an humble *Footstool*; sure the *least* we can do, is to bid him *welcome*, to give him an *hospitable Reception*, and to *open the Door* of the House within us, at which he is pleas'd *to stand knocking*, and *sue* for *Entrance*, with a *Behold I stand at the Door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me*, (Rev. 3. 20.) And therefore if ye can afford him *no better cheer*, yet at least *entertain him without Contempt*, never *treat* him at his coming with a dishonourable *Averseness*, βλέπετε μὴ παραιτήσησθε, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*

How many Miles did men go, in the *heathen World*, to hear but a *Socrates*, or a *Pythagoras*, a *Plato*, or a *Plotinus*? How many Miles went a *Queen*, to hear the *Apophthegms* of *Solomon*? what pains were taken by the *Jews*, to hear the *reading* of the *Law*? what by *Naaman* the *Syrian*, to hear the *Counsel* of *Elisha*, a single *Prophet*? And shall not *God* obtain a hearing, when he speaks to us by his *Son*? and by *such* a *Son* too, as is *God himself*? Certainly for the hearing of *such* a Speaker, 'twere worth our labour to go to *Him*, although it should cost us a *longer* Journy than from *Sheba* to *Jerusalem*; much

less should we *refuse* him, when *He* (in prevention,) is come to *us*; when God, to make *us* his *adopted* Sons, does freely *expose* his *onely begotten*; and appoints him the *Speaker*, who is the *Word* too; I mean the *hypostatical eternal Word*. Who yet does **stand at our Door*, in a posture of *painfulness* and *humility*, whilst we are *lolling* in his *House*, and perhaps *sitting* at his *Table*. How that the *Dignity* of the *Speaker* should become an *Incitement* to our *Attention*, and *what* attention we ought to give to *Him* that *speaketh* in the *Gospel*, we may infer from that which *Moses* did once exact under the *Law*. What *Attention* that was, and how he evinc'd the *greatness* of it from the great *Dignity* of the *Speaker*, will best be seen by comparing three passages of Scripture. *Deut.*4.32,33. *Deut.*6.6,7,8,9. and *Deut.*11.18,19,20. In the first of which three, *Moses* magnifies the *Privilege* allow'd by God to the People *Israel*, *To hear the voice of God speaking from out the midst of the Fire. Did ever People hear the like?* in any Time? or at any Place? First, for Time, *Ask the days that are past, since the day wherein God created Man upon the earth.* Secondly, for Place, *Ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as*

* Rev.3.20.

as This, or hath been ever heard like it. In the two next passages, *Moses* strictly injoyns the People, to *addict* themselves *wholly* to the words of *God's Law*; to be *conversant* with them both *Day* and *Night*; to have them always upon their *Hands*, and in their *Mouthes*, between their *Eyes*, and in their *Hearts.* Whereupon we are to argue *à minori ad majus.* If such attention was to be given to what was spoken onely by *Moses* to all the People, how much *more* to what is spoken by *Jesus Christ?* for *Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as He that built the House, hath more honour than the House,* (*Heb.*3.3.) And by how much a *Son* is above a *Servant.* (v.5,6.) And therefore if the Words which God had spoken by his *Servant*, much more are the Words which He hath spoken by his *Son*, very fit to be written upon our *Gates*, and our *Door-posts*, to be fixt as *Frontlets between our Eyes*, to be set as a *Seal* upon our *Hands*, and as a *Signet* upon our *Hearts.* We ought to *teach* them unto our *Children*, and to be *ruminating* on them on all *Occasions*, *in season*, *out of season*, *when we sit in our Houses*, *and when we walk by the way*, *when we lie down*, *and when we rise up.* And thus we have the *first* of the *four* Inforcements, by

by which the *Warning* of our *Apostle* may be *set home* upon our *Souls*.

§ 5. Secondly, Let us consider, (after the *Quality* of the *Speaker*,) the *Nature* of the *Things* that are *spoken* by him. They are not any such *hard* and *insupportable* sayings, as once were heard from Mount *Ebal*, *Cursed is he that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*; no nor such as were spoken long before at *Beersheba*, and to be put in Execution on Mount *Moriah*, *Take now thy Son, thine onely Son whom thou lovest, and offer him for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I shall tell thee of.* No, he does not require of *us* any such *Terrible* Expressions of our Obedience. He commands us to *kill and slay*, not our *Children*, but our *Sins*. And yet our *Sins* are our *Children* too, the *fruit* of our *Bodies* very *often*, and *still* the *fruit* of our *Souls*. Nay, many times these ugly *Children*, (I mean our *Sins*,) are *dearer* to us than *Sons* or *Daughters*. (*Agamemnon* found it easier to kill a *Daughter*, than a *Lust*.) But they are *viperous* Darlings we so much doat on; such *miscreant* Children as will *kill* their own *Parents*, if not prevented by being *kill'd*. And *these alone* are the *Children*, which God requires us

Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

Gen. 22. 2.

us to *ſacrifice* to his *Diſpleaſure*. Not our *Iſaacs*, but our *Iſhmaels*, (I mean our *wild*, and *furious*, *illegitimate Off-ſpring*) are to be *ſlain*. We muſt ſacrifice our *Diſhoneſty*, by *doing Juſtice*; we muſt ſacrifice our *Avarice*, by *ſhewing Mercy*; and we muſt ſacrifice our *Pride*, by *walking humbly with our God*. *Mic.6.8.* Well, ye have heard what it is *not*; will ye now know *what* it *is*, which *God in Chriſt* doth ſpeak to us? he ſpeaks the *beſt* and the *happieſt* Tidings, that any *wounded* or *broken* Spirit can *hope* or *pray for*. *So God loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in Him, ſhould not periſh, but have life everlaſting.* Joh.3.16. *God ſent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be ſav'd.* v.17. *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.* Joh.7.37. *He that believeth in me, there ſhall flow out of his Belly, Rivers of living water.* v. 38. *If a man keep my ſaying, he ſhall never ſee Death.* Joh.8.51. *Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* *Mat.*11.28. And *if ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* Joh. 14. 14. Thus we find *God* the *Father* ſpeaking to us by his *Son*. Now obſerve how *God* the *Son* is ſpeaking to us by his *Servants*. *If any man*

Gen.16.12.

ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, who is the propitiation for all our ſins. 1 Joh. 2. 1. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him, alſo freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32. And here I cannot but call to mind what was ſaid unto *Naaman* the churliſh *Syrian.* Who coming to *Eliſha* to be cured of his *Leproſie*, was preſcribed by the Prophet no harder Medicine than to *waſh ſeven times in the River Jordan.* When He, being *Angry*, in ſtead of *Thankfull*, ask'd if *Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damaſcus, were not better than all the Waters of Iſrael.* An Ingratitude ſo exceſſive, that his own Servants took him up, I know not whether with a more *melting* or a more *cutting* kind of Rebuke, ſaying to him, *My Father, if the Prophet had bid thee do ſome great thing, wouldſt thou not have done it? how much rather when he ſaith to thee, waſh and be clean?* After the very ſame manner may I ſay here. If God had ſent us a Meſſage by his Arch-Angel *Michael*, who is ſaid by the Rabbins to be the *Meſſenger* of his *Juſtice*, and ſo to bring news of the *ſaddeſt* nature; ſhould we not have entertain'd him as a *Meſſenger* from *Heaven, with Fear and Reverence?* And then, (with a greater force of reaſon,)

2 King. 5. 10, 11, 12, 13.

ſon,) when a Meſſenger ſo *glorious*, and one withall ſo *obliging* is ſent unto us, as *God manifeſt in the Fleſh*; and ſent unto us in *ſuch* a Meſſage, as is not onely *the word of God*, but *the word of Reconciliation*; ſure the *leaſt* we can render for ſo much Mercy, is not onely very *willingly*, but very *thankfully* to *receive* it. And therefore as for the *former*, ſo for *this* reaſon alſo, βλέπετε μὴ παραιτήσησθε, *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh.* 2 Cor. 5. 9.

§ 6. Thirdly, let us conſider, (after the *Quality* of the *Speaker*, and the *Nature* of what is *ſpoken*,) the *Condition* of the *Perſons to whom he ſpeaks*. Even to *us* who were *Gentiles*, that had long *ſat in Darkneſs, and the ſhadow of Death*. To *us* who were ſo *diſeaſed* and *ſick* of ſin, as that we could not be *cur'd* but by the *Death* of our *Phyſician*, this *Sun of Righteouſneſs did ariſe, with healing in his Wings, and tranſlated us out of Darkneſs into his marvellous light*. We had nothing but Sin and Miſery to make us capable of his *compaſſion*; and nothing more than his own *compaſſion* to make us capable of his *Love*. For had he not *lov'd* us whilſt we were *loathſome*, and in a ſtate of *Depravation*, he had not *given himſelf for us* to make us *lovely*, that is, *to redeem us from all Iniquity*. And Mal. 4. 2. Tit. 2. 14.

since the *hardness* of *our Hearts* was able enough to break *His*, (I mean, to break it) into *compassion*, and *pity* towards us; shall not the *tenderness* of *his* Heart be able enough to *melt ours*, (I mean, to *melt* them) into Tears of sincere Repentance? At *least* it should melt us into so much *good Nature*, as to afford him *willing Ears* when he speaks unto us. You know 'tis *uncivil* for any *Æqual* to *look aside* when another *speaks*. But 'tis *sawciness* in a *Cottager*, to *slight* the *speech* of his noble *Landlord*. 'Tis more than *Insolence* in a *Subject*, not to attend unto the *words* of *a gracious Soveraign*. How great a *Crime* is it (by consequence,) as well as a *clownery* in Religion, either to *laugh*, or *look aside*, or any other ways to express an haughty *Carelessness*, or *Neglect*, when *God himself* in his *Gospel* is speaking to us by his *Son*? The Men of *Israel* and of *Judah* were *more obnoxious* to Judgment than Those of *Nineve*, both for slighting *His* preaching who was *greater* than *Jonah*, and because they were a People much *more oblig'd*. For as the *better* he is that *speaks*, the *worse* it is, *not* to *attend* him; or as the more the *Things spoken* have been *obliging*, the *contempt* of such things is the more *enormous*; so the *more favours* they have received to whom the *word* of God is *offer'd*,

fer'd, the more *unpardonable* they are on ſuppoſition of their *Refuſal*. Indeed the *Jews*, and the *Mahomedans*, or the *Salvages* of *America*, may refuſe the Lord *Jeſus* with ſome *colour* of *Excuſe*. But *we* are capable of *none*, if *we neglect ſo great Salvation*, when brought unto us by a *Saviour* with whom *from our Birth* we have been *acquainted*, and of whom we know *This*, (by the inſtruction of S. *Peter*,) that *He alone hath the words of Eternal Life*. And therefore *whatever* is done by *others*, who are but *Aliens* and *Strangers* to Chriſtianity; yet in remembrance of the *Privilege* and the *Dignity* of your *Vocation*, your having been *waſhed* in the *laver* of *Baptiſm*, your having had *a Taſte of the heavenly gift, and of the Powers of the world to come*, your being *a choſen generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, which in time paſt were not a People, but are now the People of God, which had not once obtained Mercy, but have now obtained Mercy*, βλέπετε μὴ ποτε ὑμεῖς, *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh.* Heb.6.4,5. 1 Pet.2.9,10.

§ 7. Laſt of all, let us conſider, (after the *Quality* of the *Speaker*, the excellent *Nature* of what is *ſpoken*, and the *Condition* of the *Perſons* to whom he *ſpeaks*,) the *greater Degrees* of *Condemnation* to ſuch as are *guilty* of a *Refuſal*. For

as the *Dignity* of our *Calling* is above that of others, so we find our selves obliged to greater *Duty*. And the more we are *rewardable* for our *Discharge* of such Duty, by so much the *greater* is our *Danger*, if we *neglect* it. For the *Gospel* will condemn us to greater misery than the *Law*, upon *that* Supposal. An *injur'd Saviour* will become a most *angry Judge*. And our contempt of *richer Favours* than had been shewn in Times past, will but excite our *Benefactor* to *greater Fury*. Mark (I pray) what it is, which I am now to demonstrate, and press you with, (for what you can *never* enough *remember*, I cannot mind you of too *often*,) That as the *greater Dignities* are *allow'd* us, the *stricter Duties* we are *injoyn'd*; so by how much the *stricter* our *Duties* are, we must needs be obnoxious to *greater Dangers*. To **us* it is given to *know* the *Will* of our Master, and *the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven*. Here lies our *Dignity*. But if we *know* his Will, we must [a] *do* it too. There lies our *Duty*. For if we *know* it, *but do it not*, [b] *we shall be beaten with many stripes*. Therein consists our greatest *Danger*. 'Tis not the *knowledge* of our *Duties*, but the *living up* to our *knowledge*, which will stand us instead *in the Day of Wrath*. Nay, All we gain by our *Know-*

*Mat.13.11.

a Joh.13.17.

b Luk.12.47.

ledge,

ledge, whilſt it is deſtitute of *Practice*, is to be laden with *greater miſery* than they that *know nothing at all*. God who ſpake *in times paſt* to our *Forefathers* by the *Prophets*, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken to us by his *Son*. There lies our *Dignity*. But the *times of their Ignorance God winked at*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *who now commandeth all men every where to repent*. There lies our *Duty*, and *Danger* too. For if his *beſpeaking* us by his *Son* exacts to be *anſwer'd* by our *Repentance*, by ſo much the *greater* muſt be our *Miſery* if we continue in our *Impenitence*. And then what *Ground* is it of *Comfort*, that *God* in theſe laſt days hath *ſpoken* to us by his *Son*, (thereby filling us with the *knowledge* of all the Myſteries of the Goſpel,) in caſe our *Knowledge* is become *barren*, and doth not bring forth the *Fruits* of *Evangelical Integrity?* to wit, impartial *Obedience* to the whole *Law* of *Chriſt?* To what purpoſe is our *Knowledge* of all good things, without the ſedulous *execution* of what we *know*, when God who hath *ſpoken* by his *Son*, hath ſpoken *This* in effect amongſt other things, That our preſent *Guilt* will be the *more*, and our future *Stripes* the more *numerous?* It had been *better* for us, by conſequence, He had not ſpoken to us *at all*, much leſs

Heb. 1. 1, 2.

less by his *Son*, if we shall now *stop our Ears against the Voice of this Charmer*, or *onely* open our *Ears* to him, but not our *Hearts*. For what said our Lord of the stubborn *Jews*, upon whom he had bestow'd the *first-fruits* of his *Preaching*, and to whom he had offer'd the *first Refusal* of his Favours? *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin*; *but now* (that I am *come*, and have *spoken*, and both in *vain*,) *they have no excuse* or colour *for Sin*.

Joh. 15. 22.

After the very same manner, had not God spoken to us *at all*, or had he spoken to us *obscurely*, (as he spake to the *Gentiles* before the *Law*, by the great *Book* of the *Creation*, the two-fold *Volume* of *heaven* and *earth*,) or had he spoken to us onely by *Dreams*, and *Visions*, by *Urim*, and *Thummim*, by *Types*, and *Figures*, by *Angels*, and *Men*, by whom he spake unto the *Jews* under the *Pædagogie* of *Moses*; we might have alledged in our excuse, (how ineffectually soever) that we either *wholly wanted* the *means* of *knowledge*, or that the *means* were much *less* than they *might* have *been*. But now since after all *other Methods*, by which he spake to *us*, and *others*, (and which are written for our Instruction,) he hath left to us in *writing* what he spake to us by his *Son*, thereby *enlightning* our

Heads

Heads with an abundant measure of his *Knowledge*, and also hath given us of his *Spirit*, whereby to *warm* our *Hearts* too with a competent measure of his *Grace*; what *Apologie* or *Pretense* are we able to make for our *Inpieties?* We cannot alledge at his Tribunal, That we were ignorant of his *Glory*, and unacquainted with his *Works*; *for* **the heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work.* (*Psal.*19.1.) We cannot say in that hour, that we were destitute of the *Law*; for He hath **written it in our Hearts.* Nor that we wanted his *Gospel*; for He hath put it into our *Ears.* Nor that we were strangers unto his *Name*; for we daily take it into our *Lips.* Nor can we plead that He exacted, *more* than 'twas possible for us to do; for (we know) [a] *we can do all things through Him that strengthens us.* And *he accepteth according to what we have*, (although it be *but a willing mind*,) where nothing more can be perform'd. 2 *Cor.*8.12. He accepts the *least* Things, where the *least* are the *greatest* that we can *give.* *Sincere* we can be, although not *sinless.* Let us but be what we *can*, and be *perfectly willing* to be what we can *not*; that is, let us be *perfect* as it is *possible* for us to be, and perfectly *willing* to be perfect **as our Father*

* *Quicquid humano aspectui subjicitur, Templum ejus vocavit qui sola mente corspicitur, ut qui hæc veneratur ut Templa, cultum tamen maximum debeat Conditori; sciatque quisquis in usum Templi hujus inducitur, ritu sibi vivendum Sacerdotis.* Macrobius.

* Rom.10.6, 7,8.

[a] Philip.3.13.

* Matth.5. 48.

in Heaven; and then we have that *willing mind*, which S. *Paul* doth aſſure us will be *accepted*.

But here I would not be ſo *miſtaken*, (by ſuch as *love* to be *miſled* into *pleaſant Errors*,) as if I had hinted that the *Will* is ſtill as good as the *Deed*; or that if we are deſirous to *do* our Duties, *and do them not*, it will certainly *ſerve* our *turn*, as well as *if we had* done them. The *Apoſtle* does not *ſo* ſpeak, and I onely ſpeak with the *Apoſtle*; whoſe words to the *Corinthians* are plainly Theſe. *If there be firſt a willing mind, God accepteth according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* Which is as if he ſhould have ſaid, God will not puniſh any man living who does *as much* as he is *able*, for the *not doing* of That, which 'tis *impoſſible* for him to *do*. From whence 'tis obvious to infer, *not* that any man may *preſume* upon God's acceptance of his *Will*, or his *woulding rather*, without the *performance* of his Duty, when he is able to *perform* as well as *will* it; (for this were to juſtifie our *wilfulleſt*, which are our very *worſt* ſins;) but that when we have in earneſt done the *greateſt* good we *can*, God accepts of our *willingneſs* to do the good we can *not*. Being *as good* as we are able, he will not be angry we are

are *no better*. When he finds us *ſincere* in all our Services, he will not condemn us for *not* being *ſinleſs*. But notwithſtanding *all This*, which is indeed for our *Comfort*, It is every whit as *true*, and for our *Humiliation*, that we ſhall be utterly *unexcuſable* at the laſt great Audit, (*in the day when God ſhall judge the Secrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt*,) in caſe we ſo far *refuſe Him that ſpeaks to us from Heaven*, as live no more ſtrictly *with* all the Advantages of the Goſpel, than the *Jews* and the *Gentiles* who liv'd *without* them.

Firſt, from the *Gentiles*, 'tis argued Thus by S. *Paul*. If *They* were left without excuſe, who had *no other* Scripture than the great *Book* of *Hieroglyphicks*, the double *Syſtem* of the *Creatures* in Heaven and Earth; and had *no other Light*, than that of *Reaſon* whereby to read it; and had no *Law* to go by, but That of *Nature*; and had no where elſe to *ſee* it, but in the *Tables* of their *Hearts*; and where 'twas written in no *Characters*, but what were *Inviſible* to their *Eyes*; then what excuſe can *We* hope for, whom God hath ſpoken to by his Son? (and who, beſides the *Light of Nature*, have All the *Inſtruments of Grace* too,) if *We* ſhall ſin againſt the *light* of ſo clear a *Knowledge*? 'Tis very plain

Rom. 1. 19, 20, 21.

that we *Christians* may be *less excusable* than the *Gentiles*, who (many of them) *never heard* of the *Name* of *Christ*, and yet for all that were *unexcusable*.

Secondly, from the *Jews*, we find our *Author* to the *Hebrews* disputing thus, *Heb.* 10.28, 29. If *he that despised Moses Law died without mercy, under two or three Witnesses*; πόσῳ χείρονος τιμωρίας, *Of how much sorer Punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God?* And *He* is reckon'd to be the Man that hath *trodden under foot the Son of God*, whoever he is that *sinneth wilfully, after he hath received the knowledge of the Truth.* (v.26.) For if *then* we sin wilfully, *there remaineth no more sacrifice* or expiation *for sins; but a certain fearfull looking for of Judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.* (v.27.) The confirmation of this we have *Heb.* 6.4,5,6. where 'tis affirm'd to be *impossible for them that once have been inlightned, and have tasted of the good word of God, if They fall away, to be renewed unto Repentance.* And the reason there is, *because* (in God's interpretation) *they crucifie to themselves the Son of God, and put him to an open shame.* This again is confirm'd by 2 *Pet.* 2.20,21. where the *End of relapsed Christians*

is

is ſaid to be worſe than the Beginning. And thence 'tis inferred to be better, never to have known the way of Truth, than after they have known it to turn, *&c.* Thus you ſee how the *Jews* might be *leſs excuſable* than the *Gentiles*, and yet how *We* who are *Chriſtians* may be *leſs excuſable* than the *Jews*. And therefore let us look to it, *that we refuſe not him that ſpeaketh*, but rather that we make him ſome *proportionable Anſwer*; ſpeaking back to him *better*, than by our *Sins*, to wit, *by Repentance, and change of Life. For if They eſcaped not who refuſed Him that ſpake on earth, much leſs ſhall we, if we turn away from Him that ſpeaketh from heaven.*

§ 8. I do inſiſt ſo much the rather upon this *fourth* and *laſt* Topick, from which the *Caveat* or *Warning* is now *inforc'd*, becauſe the *hope* of *Reward* in a world to come, is *leſs available* with men than the *fear* of *Puniſhment*; and becauſe the *Holy Ghoſt* does ſeem to *prefer* this way of arguing, not onely in my *Text*, but in diverſe *other* places of *this Epiſtle*. In the *ſecond Chapter* more eſpecially, (at the *firſt*, *ſecond*, *third*, and *fourth Verſes*,) we find the *Argument* and the *Inference* to be much the ſame that they are *here*. Firſt of all obſerve the *Argument*, and eſpecially the *Topick* from which

'tis drawn. *If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just recompence of reward,* πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευξόμεθα, *How shall we then escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness both with Signs and Wonders, and diverse Miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?* which is as much as to say, That because *Christ* was superiour both to *Moses* and to the *Angels*, by the ministery of whom the *Law* was spoken unto the *Jews*, therefore we who are *Christians* are bound to yield the *greater reverence* to That which *God* in the *Gospel* hath spoken to us by his *Son*. For if the *Israelites* were plagu'd for *their* contempt of the *Law*, much *more* shall we *Christians* for our *Neglect* of the *Gospel*.

§ 9. What now is the *Use* we are to make of this *Doctrine*, or what the *Inference* to be drawn from this *Argument?* Is it onely in the *negative*, That we *refuse not* him that speaketh? or that we have *not any Averseness* to his *Person* or his *Words?* no, a man may be *indifferent*, without *averseness*; he may be *cold* and *unattentive* to what is spoken, without an absolute

Con-

Contempt, or *Refusal* of it. And therefore the Inference is so *plainly* and so *positively* expres's'd, as to be utterly *exclusive* of all *Indifference*. 'Tis δεῖ ἡμᾶς περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, *We ought to give the more earnest heed unto the things that we have heard*; and that for this reason, *lest at any time we let them slip*. The Apostle's word is, μήποτε παραῤῥυῶμεν, a Metaphor taken from the *falling away of Water*, when being not kept within its Bounds it *runs wastfully about*, and so is *spilt* upon the *ground*, as *Phavorinus* and *Hesychius* do both expound it. A Metaphor the fitter, and the more worthy to be consider'd, because the *word of God* in Scripture is compar'd and resembled to those *three Liquids*, *Wine*, *Milk*, and *Water*. To the *first*, by *Isaias*; to the *second*, by S. *Peter*; and by S. *John* unto the *third*. We must be therefore very carefull, as well to *retain*, as to *receive* the *Wine* and *Milk* of the *word*, and as it were to *bottle up* the *Water of Life*, (as *David* prays God to do his *Tears*,) lest at any time we *shed* it, or let it *fall*. For there is no *Cordial Water*, which we are not carefull to *preserve*; (be it but *Cinnamon*, or *Surfet* Water.) Nor is there any *wholesom Milk*, which we think not *too good* to be *cast away*; (be it but a *Cow's*, or an *Asse's* Milk.) Nor

Heb. 2. 1.

Isa. 55. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 2. Rev. 22. 1, 17.

Nor is there any want of heed to keep our *Wine* from being *loſt*, although it be made of a *common Grape*. But ſince the *Wine* I *now* ſpeak of is that that *flow'd* from *his Mouth*, who call'd himſelf *the True Vine*; And ſince the *Milk* is none other, than the *ſincere Milk of the word*; And ſince the *Water* is no leſs *pretious*, than *the Water of Life*, a Water *flowing out* from *Him* whom S. *Paul* calls a *Rock*, from whence there guſhes out *a Fountain of living Water*; ſure we ought to be *ſtudious* and *carefull* of it, more than of any thing in the world which is committed to be kept in *our earthen Veſſels*. Δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν περισσοτέρως, we ought to give the *more abundant and earneſt heed* to the word of God which we have heard, (that *Wine*, that *Milk*, that *Water of Life*, which we have *drank* out of the *Goſpel*, and have imbib'd into our *Ears*,) whereby our *Souls* may be *nouriſhed* to *Life Eternal*.

1 Cor. 10. 4.

Rev. 7. 17. 21. 6.

2 Cor. 4. 7.

Yet there are *multitudes* in the *world*, I mean in our *Chriſtian Reformed* world, (upon whom what I have ſaid muſt needs reflect very ſeverely,) who are ſo *cold*, and ſo *careleſs* in *reading* or *hearing* the word of God, that there is hardly any thing elſe to which they are not *much more attentive*. If a *Mountebank* in the *Street* ſhall ſpeak

ſpeak to the People from a *Scaffold*, they will preſently *flock* to him, and give him *Audience*. If any *Revels* are to be kept, or a new *Comœdy* to be acted, the *Souls* of men will be *running out* at their *Eyes* and *Ears*, through the *great* and *earneſt heed* which they will give unto the things that are *ſaid* or *done*. If a *Tertullus* or an *Herod* ſhall make an eloquent Oration, his Auditors will be apt to cry aloud with thoſe Paraſites, (*Act.* 12.22.) *it is the voice of a God, and not of a Man*. Whereas when one of *Chriſt's Sermons* is recited out of the *Goſpel*, the hearers are commonly as *indifferent*, and as ſeemingly *unconcern'd*, as if they ſaid inwardly in their hearts, (the flat *Reverſe* of what was ſaid of the Speech of *Herod*,) *it is the word of a Man, and not of a God*. Do They give *heed* to what they hear, who if they are not quite *aſleep*, are yet ſo *yawningly attentive*, as to *forget* in an *Inſtant*, what they *hear* in an *hour*? No, did they heed the *word of God*, as they often do the *actions* and *words* of *Men*, (if not in *real admiration*, at leaſt in *flattery*,) they would carry what they learn from *this Year* unto the *next*; not *in utramque aurem dormire*, or at leaſt *in duarum alteram*, letting out at the *right* Ear what they receive into the *left*; as if they purpoſed to *con-*

fute this *Epiſtle to the Hebrews*, when it ſaith in
Heb. 4. 12. another place, that *the word of God is quick, and powerfull, and ſharper than any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing of Soul and Spirit*; or had a mind to enervate that ſaying of S. *Paul*, as to *their* Particulars, That *the*
Rom. 1. 16. *Goſpel of Chriſt is the Power of God unto Salvation.*

§ 10. What may probably be the reaſon, why men will ſleep at a *Sermon*, a great deal ſooner than at a *Play?* is it not becauſe they are *leſs attentive*, and by conſequence leſs *delighted* to be in the *Church* than in the *Theater*, and by conſequence more in love with what is meant onely to *pleaſe*, than with what is meant to *profit* them to Life Eternal? Or ſuppoſe them moſt delighted in Church-Aſſemblies. What then may be the reaſon, why they are much more attentive to the *words* of *Men* out of the *Pulpit*, than to the *word* of *God* out of the *Pew?* Is it not that they prefer the *gratification* of the *Ear* to the *Rectification* of the *Heart?* And why ſhould that be, if not for want of *true Belief*, or elſe of *due Conſideration*, that the *Old and New Teſtament* are *God's own word?* and that the *Goſpel* in particular is the word which *God the Father* hath ſpoken to us *by God the Son?*

And

And why ſhould *this* be ſo little *heeded*, (if 'tis really *believ'd*) unleſs becauſe it is ſo *cheaply*, and ſo *commonly* to be had? were the *Sun* to be ſeen but *once* or *twice* in the Year, he would be much more *conſider'd* than now he is; it being the *commonneſs* of his *Shining* which makes him paſs over our heads ſo *unregarded*. And as it is with the *Works*, ſo is it too with the *Word* of God. For in the *Infancy* of the Church, before *printing* was *invented*, what *care* and *coſt* were men at, to write out Copies of the *Goſpel?* and in what *honour* was it had, when *but newly* to be had in the *Vulgar Tongues?* whereas now that it is grown both *cheap*, and *common*, it is commonly as *Pearl* caſt out to *Swine*. Many ſit not at *eaſe*, whilſt the Prieſt is in the reading of *Pſalms* and *Chapters*; and many *loyter* without the *Church*, until they are very well aſſur'd the Preacher is going into the *Pulpit*; not at all laying to heart, (what yet they cannot but aſſent to, if ever it enters into their Heads whilſt their Heads are Chriſtian,) that the chiefeſt part of God's Service hath been performed in the *Pew*. For the moſt powerfull *words* of *Men* can but *edifie* at the beſt, whereas the pure *word* of *God* is apt to *ſanctifie* and **cleanſe* us, *Joh.* 17. 17. and as S. *Peter* once ſaid to the *Jewiſh Sanedrim*,

* Joh. 15. 3.

Act. 5 29.

nedrim, *we* ought to *obey* God rather than Man. So in this Case also, we ought to ***hear*** God rather than Men. Now the Lesson which is read out of the *Law* and the Prophets is the very *word* of *God* which he hath spoken by his *Servants*. And so the Lesson out of the *Gospel* is the very *word* of *God* which he hath spoken by his *Son*. Whereas the customary *Discourse* which we call a *Sermon*, though it is *profitable*, and *pious*, and therefore *worthy* of all *acceptance*; yet 'tis of *human Contrivance* and *Composition*, if it is not all taken, *word for word*, out of the *Scripture*; and if it is, it is no more, than so much *Scripture* as fills an *hour*. And how far it is from That, our own experience may inform us from several Pulpits; wherein we are often entertain'd with accurate *Essays*, and *Harangues*, with florid *Discourses*, and *Declamations*, which have a very strong savour of *Art*, and *Diligence*, and are deservedly applauded for *Wit*, and *Learning*; but are so far from being *drawn* from the *Well of Life*, so far from being *wholly made*, or *mostly deduced* out of *Scripture*, as to have hardly any *Tincture* or *Relish* of it. As if their Authors were afraid, with *Cardinal Bembus* and other *Romanists*, (who are complain'd of and accus'd by *Dominicus*

Hottinger. *de Necessit. Reform.* p. 21, 22.

nicus Nanus Mirabellius,) to *fully* and *flatten* their Elocution with *the Oracles of God*. As if they had the same opinion touching the *Language* of the *Pulpit*, with the Prophane *Cardinal Hosius* touching the *wellfare* of the *Church*, when he said *it had been better if no Gospel had been written*. As if the *Scripture* had seem'd to *Them*, what once it did to S.* *Austin* before he was *absolutely converted*, very *unworthy to be compar'd with Cicero's Elegance of Expression*. I wish we might not complain of *some*, who are call'd to be *Preachers* of the *Gospel*, as *Laurentius Valla* was said to do of *Cardinal Sadolet*, and *Politian*, and other Orators of their Age, *Gentilem illos Sermonem magis, quàm Ecclesiasticum deamâsse*, That they have rather lov'd an *Ethnical*, than *Ecclesiastical* way of speaking. And yet if in a zealous *Enmity* to such affected *Idolizers* of *human Eloquence*, the Preacher frames his *whole Sermon*, word for word, out of the *Scripture*; what is *This* but the *Recital* of so much *Scripture* as fills an *Hour*? And then 'tis certainly as regardable, when barely *read* out of the *Pew*, as when with *Emphasis* and *gesture* it is *rehearsed* out of the *Pulpit*.

§ 11. *Refuse not* therefore him that speaketh, upon any Pretense to be imagin'd. Not for

* *Cùm attendi ad illam Scripturam, visa est mihi indigna quam Tullianæ Dignitati compararem. Tumor enim meus refugiebat modum ejus, &c.* Augustin. *Confess. l. 3. c. 5. p. 60.*

the *meanness* of the *Person* by whom he speaks. Not for the *Plainness* of the language in which he speaks. Not for the *Hardness* or mysteriousness of the *things* that are spoken by him. Not for the *cheapness* or the *commonness* of what he speaks. Nor yet for any other Objections, which some who are wittily profane are wont to urge against the Scriptures. For I suppose it to be true, because I find it in the writings of an honourable Author, *That *some of those who do acknowledge both the Truth, and the Authority, do find I know not how many faults with the stile of Scripture*; As that it is *too obscure*, and *immethodical*, and *contradicting to it self*; *incohærent*, and *unadorn'd*, *flat*, and *unaffecting*; abounding with things that are either *trivial*, or *impertinent*, and also *with useless Repetitions*. Monsters more prodigious than any *Africa* can afford us, who *acknowledging* the *Authority* and *Truth* of Scripture, can so blasphemously *detract* from the *Credit* of it.

*See Mr. Robert Boyle his third Edition of Considerations touching the stile of the Holy Scriptures. p. 4.

§ 12. But βλέπετε μὴ παραιτήσησθε, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*, for all the scandalous Aspersions, that either the *Wit* or the *Malice* of *Men* or *Devils* shall at any time contrive to be cast upon him in his Word. And First, refuse not him that speaketh, for the *meanness* of

of the *Perſon* by whom he ſpeaks. The *word* of *God* being as *ſacred* when pronounced by the Mouth of the loweſt *Prieſt*, as when by That of the profoundeſt and greateſt *Prelate* in the Church. Nay his word being *as pure* out of a *vitious* man's Lips, as the *Beams* of the *Sun*, when daily *reflected* from a *Dunghill*; or as the *moſt uncorrupted* and limpid *Water*, when it is running through a *ſordid* and *earthy Channel*. As the *Bleſſing* of God to *Iſrael* was not the *worſe* or the *leſs welcome*, for proceeding from the Lips of a curſed *Balaam*; ſo his *Rebuke* ſent to *Balaam* was not the leſs to be attended, for being ſpoken by the Mouth of an *arrant Aſs*. Be not therefore as *impatient* of being ſpoken to by a *Prieſt* of the pooreſt *Talent* and *Degree*, as *Nabal* was of being ſpoken to by a *perſecuted*, and *deſtitute*, but *royal Prophet*; nor ſo impatient of a *Reproof* from any the *meaneſt* of God's Embaſſadours, as *Abner* from *Iſhboſheth*, or as *Herod* from *John the Baptiſt*, or as *Ahab* from *Micaiah*, who for ſpeaking an *unpleaſant*, but *wholſome Truth*, was preſently clapt up in *Priſon*, and fed with the *Bread* of *Affliction* too. Entertain not the *vileſt* of all *Chriſt's Meſſengers*, as the *Phariſees* and the *Rulers* did *Chriſt Himſelf*, when they did ἐκμυκτηρίζειν, *deride* and *ſcoff*

1 Sam. 25. 3, 10, 17.

2 Sam. 3. 7, 8.

1 King. 22. 27.

Luk. 16. 14. *ch.* 23. *v.* 35, 36.

scoff at him for the *despicable Garb* of his *Appearance*. But be as civil to him at least, as ye would that your *Equals* should be to *You*; and even because ye are unwilling to have *your* Messages *refus'd*, for being sent by the *basest* of all your *Servants*, therefore *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*, for the *meanness* of the *Person* by whom he speaks.

§ 13. Secondly do not *refuse* him, for the *plainness* of the *Language* in which he speaks. For what is *Plainness*, but *Perspicuity?* and of all those Virtues which are required in an *Orator*, *Perspicuity* and *Pertinence* are worthily reckon'd amongst the *chief*. So far forth as the Scriptures contein a *Covenant*, and a *Law*, the one of *Works*, and the other of *Faith*, (That delivered by *Moses*, and This by *Christ*,) there is nothing more becomes the *State* and *Majesty* of its *Author*, than to communicate with his People in greatest *Plainness*. Or is the *Gospel* very destitute of what the world calls *Wit* and *Eloquence?* call to mind that *God the Father* hath sent it to us by *God the Son*; and pay an humble *Veneration* to what is *spoken*, for the honour you bear unto Him that *speaks*. And since his words are *the words of Eternal Life*, (that is, the *words* of *Direction* by our *Conformity*

Intendi animum in Scripturas sanctas ut viderem quales essent. Et ecce video Rem non compertam superbis, neque nudatam Pueris, sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam, & velatam mysteriis, & non eram ego talis ut intrare possem, aut inclinare Cervicem ad ejus gressus. Augustin. *in Confess. l. 3. c. 5. p. 60.*

mity to which we ſhall *live for ever*,) of what a *barbarous ingratitude* ſhall *we* be judged to be guilty, if we ſhall *quarrel* at his *Care* to have their *meaning underſtood?* Beſides, it ought to be remembred, that there are ***Parables*** in the Scripture, as well as ***Plainneſſes of Speech***; Places ſo *deep*, that an *Elephant* may *ſwimm*, as well as Places ſo *ſhallow*, that a *Lamb* may *wade* through them. There are ſome ſuch * δυσνόητα, things ſo difficult and *hard* to be *underſtood*, as that the *Ignorant and unſtable* (who are *arrogant*, and *proud*, as well as *empty*,) do many times *wreſt them to their Damnation.* And therefore whatſoever elſe may be the colour for your Refuſal, *See that ye refuſe not* an heavenly Speaker, for the *Plainneſs* of the *Dialect* in which he ſpeaks; becauſe, of *all* his *Condeſcenſions* expreſſed to us in his *word*, this muſt certainly be one of the *moſt Obliging.* And yet

* 2 Pet. 3. 16.

§ 14. Thirdly, do not *refuſe* him, for the *myſteriouſneſs* of the things that are ſpoken by him. For what were *this* but to find fault with the *ſublimity* of the *matter?* and implicitly to complain, that there is *ſtrong meat* for *men* of the *ripeſt Age*, as well as *Milk* for thoſe *Babes* who are *unskilfull in the word of righteouſneſs?* It were to quarrel with the Scripture for having

Heb. 5. 13, 14.

any thing in it whereby to *exercise* our *Diligence*, and *crown* our *Search*, to make us *sensible* of our *weakness*, and to *excite* our *Admiration*. Besides, it ought to be consider'd, that as there are *Mysteries* in the Scripture, so there are
* 1 Cor 4.1. * *Stewards* of those mysteries. As things *lock'd up* from low and vulgar Apprehensions, so there are also special men to whom is committed the
Luk.11.52. *Key of Knowledge*. The *Priest's Lips* are to *pre-*
Mal.2.7. *serve* it, and *the People are to seek* it flowing out in expositions *from his Orthodox mouth*. 'Tis fit the Scripture should be *plain*, and *mysterious* too; I mean in *several parts* of it, for *several purposes* and *ends*. For if *nothing* in it were *plain*, we should but *grope* after heaven, and *miss* the *way* too. And yet if nothing were *mysterious*, its over great *Familiarity* would make it liable to *contempt*. Whereas the due consideration of *both together* will discover to us the *Use* and the *End* of Sermons. For though it is not perhaps the *pleasant'st*, yet it may seem to be the *best*, because the *profitablest* Preaching in all the World, onely to *read*, and *expound*, and *apply* the Scripture; to shew the *sense*, where it is *difficult*, and the *use*, when it is *easie*. And therefore *See that ye* refuse not him that speaketh, for the *hardness* of the things *that are spoken by him*.

§15. Fourth-

§ 15. Fourthly, do not *refuse* him, for the *cheapness* or the *commonness* of what he speaks. For *this* were just as extravagant, as if a man should *disesteem* and *depretiate* the worth of the *New Jerusalem*, because the very *Foundations of the wall of the City were adorn'd with all manner of pretious Stones*; and so *common* a thing was *Pearl*, that the *Gates* of the City *consisted* of it; and so *cheap* was *pure Gold*, that the *street* of the City was *nothing else*. To slight the *means of Salvation* for being *commonly to be had*, is just as if a *Nice* person should *die* with *Thirst*, rather than *quench* it with *common VVater*. Or as if a *proud* person should *scorn* his *life*, for depending upon so *cheap* and so *common* an Element as the *Air*. There is nothing more *destructive* and *dishonourable* to men, than their *Itching* after things that are *rare* and *novel*. This was one of those Crimes wherewith God *upbraided* his People *Israel*, That *forsaking him* the old and the *living Fountain*, they had *hewn* unto themselves such *broken Cisterns*, as had nothing but *newness* to recommend them. And therefore such Men and Women are very sharply to be *rebuk'd*, (as S. *Paul* chargeth *Timothy* in the very same Case,) who *not enduring sound Doctrine*, for being *old*, do *turn aside unto Fables*,

Rev. 21. 19, 21.

2 Pet. 4. 3, 4.

Fables, for being *new*; and still are *heaping up Teachers*, not to work upon their *Hearts*, but to gratifie their delicate and prurient *Ears*. Choosing rather to *quench* their *Thirst* out of every *new Ditch*, than to satisfie themselves with the *Antient Springs*. And therefore if ye do not think, that *the Antient of days* is the *less* to be valued for being *antient*, to wit, *the Lamb slain from the Foundations of the world*; or that the *Waters* of *Life eternal* do lose their *Virtue* with their *credit* by being *cheap*, by being *easily* to be *had*, *without Money*, *and without Price*; See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for the *commonness* of the things that are spoken by him.

Isa. 55. 1.

§ 16. Last of all do not *refuse* him in case his words shall sometimes seem to be *incoherent*, *immethodical*, *contradicting to themselves*, *unaffecting*, or *impertinent*, or clog'd with *useless Repetitions*. For first *at most* they can *but seem* to be such and such, as the *Sun* does onely *seem* to be *deform'd* in an *Eclipse*, and *no bigger* than a *Bushel* in his *Meridian*; Next, they cannot so much as *seem* so to labour with Defects, unless it be through *our Defects* of *Understanding*, or of *Humility*, of competent *Industry*, or *Art*, sufficient *Time* to *converse with*, or *Patience* to *consides* the things we read.

§ 17. In

§ 17. In a word, as we desire that we may *never* be *refused* by *God Almighty*, when at any time we shall *speak*, or *cry* to *Him* in our *Distress*, whether by *Prayers*, or *Tears*, from a *Gallows*, or from a *Rack*, perhaps out of a *Prison*, perhaps out of a *Pest-house*, out of the *Belly* of a *Leviathan*, or (which at least is as terrible) out of the *Bowels* of a *sinking* and *dying Ship*, (for we know not *what end* may await us all;) I say, as ever we hope to be *heard our selves*, when in any kind of Exigence we *speak* to *God*, let us at least give *God* the *hearing*, when in any kind of Dialect he *speaks* to *Us*. Be it by his *Son*, or by his *Servants*, be it by *Precept*, or by *Example*, by *Life*, or *Doctrine*, by *Exhortations*, or *Admonitions*, by *Promises*, or *Threats*, by his *Prophet*, or by his *Rod*, by *Words*, or *Blows*. And be it by whatsoever *Instrument* the *Blows* of God are *laid on*; by *War*, *Pestilence*, *Fire*, or *Famine*. The *first* of which is now *consuming* our valiant Country-men *abroad*; The *second* (you know) hath been *devouring* far and wide here at *home*; The *third* hath lately laid waste the goodliest Empory in the world, by having us'd our *Great City*, as once the *Cities of the Plain*: And unless our *Repentance* or *change of Life*, shall cry *as loud* in God's Ears

Οὐκ ἂν θεοῖς ὀπιθεῖμεν, μάλα τ' ἐκλυεν αὐτός. Homer. Il. α.

as our *Sins* have done, we know not how soon we may *feel* the *Fourth*. *Less* than which I cannot say to the *most considering* Congregation; and if *this little* be laid to heart, I think I need not say *more*.

Committing therefore what I have said to due and serious Consideration, I shut up all with That Prayer which is the fittest to compleat and conclude the *Sermon*:

That what we have heard at this time with our outward Ears, may by the powerfull Grace of God, be so grafted inwardly in our Hearts, as to bring forth in us the fruit of good Living; to the Honour and Praise of his Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom, with the Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be Glory, and Thanksgiving both now and for ever. Amen.

THE

THE APPENDIX.

§. 1. OUr ſteddy Adherence or Aſſent to the *Two laſt* Articles of the Creed, (and indeed to the other *Ten*,) cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt without our Aſſent unto the *Firſt*. We cannot certainly believe that *we ſhall riſe from the Dead*, unleſs it be by believing that *Chriſt is riſen*. And as little can we believe that *Chriſt is riſen*, unleſs it be by believing firſt, *that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto Himſelf*. This implies and preſuppoſes the *Firſt* Article of our Creed, which is as well the *Foundation* as the *Support* of all the Reſt. But ſince the breaking looſe of Hell in This laſt Age of a loathſome World, we have met with ſuch *Enemies* (not onely to *ours*, but) to *All Religion*, as from their *wiſhing and woulding* there *were* no God, (no Reſurrection of the Body, no life after Death, no Day of Judgment,) have proceeded ſo far, as to ſay, and teach, There *is* no God; nor any one of thoſe Things which have been regularly *built* upon This *Foundation*. And

And if we ſuffer This *Foundation* to be either undermin'd, or but *ſhaken* in us, All the *Fabrick* of our *Faith* will fall to nothing in an Inſtant. An Error *here* is like one in the *firſt* Concoction, which cannot be mended in the *ſecond*. If we do not believe *in God*, [the *firſt* Article of our Creed,] we cannot chooſe but be *Infidels* in *All* that *follow*. Nor are we onely to *believe* him, as *Belief* is oppoſed unto a *comprehenſive* knowledge; But we muſt *knowingly* believe him, as *Belief* is conſiſtent with knowledge meerly *Apprehenſive*. And ſo as to ſay with as much Truth, as S. *Paul* to *Timothy*, (every man for himſelf, in whatſoever Temptations and Times of Trial,)

2 Tim. 2, 12. *For I know whom I have believed.*

§ 2. A Text which ſerves well for a double purpoſe; to aſcertain our *Knowledge*, and to eſtabliſh our *Belief*, as well as to ſhew the juſt *meaſure*, and *uſe* of Both in our Religion. A Text accordingly to be conſider'd, not onely in its *Relative*, but in its *Abſolute* importance.

Firſt, the words in their Relation to Thoſe that *follow* and go *before* them, will be moſt eaſily underſtood by being paraphraſed Thus. I am a *Preacher*, and an *Apoſtle*, and therefore now

now a **Prisoner* of *Jesus Christ*. Even *for this very cause* of my being sent forth *by* [a] *the Will of God*, and made *a* [b] *Teacher of the Gentiles*, I suffer these *Bonds* and *Persecutions* of the *Jews*. But *I am not asham'd* of my Bonds, or Office; I am not sorry for my Preaching, though 'tis the Cause of my Imprisonment. For He on whom I have depended will never forsake me, I am sure. In His hands I can with chearfulness repose my Life, by whom my Death will be a Door to my Resurrection. For I have not believ'd I know not whom. Nor do I *nakedly believe*, whom I love, and adore, and rely upon; but I perfectly *Know* whom I have believed; and have a *plenitude* of *Perswasion*, that He for whom I now suffer will never fail me, *on Him my Cares are all cast, who careth for me.* With *Him* I have intrusted the whole *Depositum* of my *Labours* in the preaching of the Gospel, and the *Depositum* of my *Sufferings* for having preach'd it. And whatsoever I *have* intrusted, or *shall* intrust to His keeping, be it my *Body*, or my *Soul*, my Body in *Peace*, or my Soul in *Patience*, I am assur'd he is *Able*, and am *perswaded* he is *Willing*, to lay it up for me *against That Day*. A Day expressed to us in Scripture by such Periphrases as These. *The Day wherein the Lord*

* *v.* 8.
a *v.* 1.
b *v.* 11.

Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire. The Day wherein God shall judge the Secrets of men by Jesus Christ. The Day when all that are in the Grave shall hear his Voice, and come forth. The Day of Discrimination when He will make up his **Jewels, and a Book of Remembrance shall lie before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.* All my Concerns are left with *Him*, who will keep them in safety *against That Day.* Thus lies the Text in its relation to the Context.

* Mal. 3. 16, 17.

§ 3. But being consider'd in *it self*, and *without* such Relation, 'twill be as easily understood by this other Paraphrase. I *know* Him perfectly, as to his *Being*, whom I *believe* as to his *Essence:* or whom, as to his *Essence*, I know *in part onely.* I can *demonstrate* his *Existence*, although I can but most firmly *believe* his *Word.* For at one and the same time, as also in one and the same respect, I cannot *know*, and *believe* him too; because what I *know*, I do *more* than believe, or am *past* believing: And what I do *but believe*, I have not yet *attained* the knowledge of. *Knowledge* and *Belief* do move in two distinct Spheres, and That of *Knowledge* is so much *higher*, than This of *Faith*, that 'tis the

the *Perfection* of a man's *Faith*, wholly to *periſh*, and *expire*; to be *drown'd*, and *ſwallow'd up* into perfect *Knowledge*. St. *Paul* expreſſeth his *Believing* by his *knowing in part*. And the Top of his comfort does ſtand in This, *that when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away*. Here *we can but ſee darkly, as through a glaſs*; but the time is now coming when *we ſhall ſee face to face*. Here we onely can *Believe* the *Three Subſiſtences* of the Godhead in but *one and the ſame Subſtance*; whereas in *That Day* of Revelation and Reſtitution, we ſhall *Know* this great Myſtery *even as alſo we are Known*. Here we can but *Believe* the Reſurrection of our Bodies; but (in the great Day of Recompence) our Fruition and Experience will make us *Know* it. We do not know more exactly that *Five and Five* do make *Ten*, or that *a part* of any Dimenſion is unequal to *the whole*, than we do *Know* and can *demonſtrate* (againſt the Enemies of a Deity) the uncontroulable exiſtence of the Deity we adore. But This I ſay onely of God's *Exiſtence*, and of his *Eſſence* onely *in part*. For in our deepeſt Contemplation of certain *Myſteries* in our Religion, ſuch as a *Trinity* of the *Perſons* in the *Unity* of the *Godhead*; the *Generation* of the *Se-*

1 Cor. 13. 9. 10. 12.

cond, the *Proceſſion* of the *Third*, and yet the *Coeſſentiality* of Both-together with the *Firſt*; I ſay, in *This* contemplation our *Childiſh underſtandings* become ſo *froward*, they cannot be quieted but by *Faith*. Our firm *Belief* of God's *Word* can alone *rock* them into a *ſleep*. In the mean time 'tis matter to us of unſpeakable Comfort, that by our abſolute *Knowledge* of His *Verity*, and by our ſtedfaſt *Belief* of His *Veracity*, we can eaſily *acknowledge* the higheſt Myſteries in the Godhead, which in propriety of Speech we cannot yet pretend to a *Knowledge of*. All we can do is to *believe*, that *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto Himſelf*; but that a God of Heaven there *is*, and that a God there *muſt* be, and that God is a *Spirit*, and that God being a Spirit muſt needs be *infinite*, *indiviſible*, *from everlaſting to everlaſting*, and *ſelf-ſubſiſting*: *Theſe* are things we do clearly *Know*. *Theſe* are things we can prove by ſuch cogent Reaſonings, as every *Skeptick* will *ſubmit* to, and *Malice it ſelf* cannot *reſiſt*. And ſo 'tis no Contradiction (whate're it ſeems at firſt hearing) to ſay, *We Know whom we have Believed*.

§ 4. Now out of this *twofold* Expoſition of the Text, as well conſider'd in its *abſolute*, as in its *relative* importance, a *three-*

fold

fold Quære does ariſe, and offer it ſelf to be *reſolv'd.*

The firſt Quære is, How and Why we are ſaid to *know* God, by knowledge *properly ſo call'd*; to wit, as *perfectly*, and as *plainly*, as we can know *any thing elſe*; or as fully, and as clearly, as any thing *knowable* can be *known.*

The ſecond is, How and Why our *bare* B*elieving* the *hidden Things* of our God, (as the Scripture calls them) is much more *proper*, and more *requir'd*, and more *rewardable* in Religion, than our clear and full *Knowledge* of God's *Exiſtence.* Nor onely of his *Exiſtence*, but of his *Eſſence* alſo *in part.*

The third Quære is, What are the P*owers* and the *Effects*, and the great B*enefits* of B*elieving*, (as well as of *knowing* whom we believe,) clearly implied in the Text by the Cauſal *For*, as That imports S. *Paul*'s Reaſon, for *his not being aſham'd of the things he ſuffer'd.*

A Reſolution of the Firſt, will have an aptitude to *ſhame* or *convince* the *Atheiſt.*

A Reſolution of the Second, will have a Tendency to the *Converſion*, or the *Confuſion* of the *Infidel.*

A Reſolution of the Third, will dit the Mouthes of thoſe *Scoffers*, who ſeek to ſet up

meer *Science*, (and Science *falſly ſo call'd*,) not onely *above*, but *againſt Religion*. Nor will it be an ill Office, to make the Sciolists aſham'd of their Profanations.

§ 5. Touching the *Firſt* of theſe Subjects I ſpeak the rather, (though 'tis pity 'tis not impertinent in any Auditory of Chriſtians,) becauſe I have *met* with an *Objection*, which ſome have pretended to have had from ſeveral eminent men's Writings; to wit, that the *Being* of a *Deity* cannot poſſibly be proved by *Demonſtration*, whereby to be the *Object* of *real Knowledge*; but onely by *Probable Argumentations*, which cannot poſſibly be effective of any thing greater than our *Belief*. And Humane *Belief* may be *erroneous*, though *Knowledge* cannot. Now whilſt I conſider that ſuch *Belief* is but a ſtronger ſort of *Opinion*, and that a *Radical Fear* at leaſt (in Books of Logick and Philoſophy) is affirm'd to be to Both an *eſſential thing*; and that the *Object* of *Opinion* when 'tis but humane, is ſaid to be under a *poſſibility* of *Falſhood*, however ſtrong enough to exclude a *poſſibility* of *Doubting*; I ſay, conſidering theſe things, it ſeemeth firſt a *Diſparagement* to the *God* whom we ſerve, to be aſſerted by his Votaries, as a Thing *Credible* rather than *Known*. Next, a *Diſparagement*

ment to *Theology*, not to be as *Scientifical* of its object's Existence, as some *inferiour* Things are; but to content it self to argue from *Topicks Probable* onely by nature, however as *strong*, and as *persuasive*, as the *matter will bear which it seeks to prove. A *Disparagement* in the last place it cannot but be to our *Religion*, if we cannot be *as certain* of the *Deity* we *adore*, as of other Things; and if we are not as able to prove *His* Being, as any vulgar *Geometrician* to prove a *Theorem* in *Euclid*. Such *cold* and *frigid* ways of Reasoning, as do pretend but to *perswade*, not at all to *compel*, or *constrain* the Atheist, may seem *à Tanto* to *excuse*, and so to *gratifie* his Impiety, by thus *extenuating* the *Evidence* which *God* has given us of Himself; and by making That *less*, than indeed it is. To speak of the *Deity's Credibility*, may chance to harden *some* Atheists, who *scorn all Preaching*; though it may chance to soften *others*, who are but lightly drawn in, and of better Natures. But 'tis worthily to be fear'd, it may *occasion* some *Skepticks*, who yet are *none*. For some we know have been so stagger'd by *Topical* arguments for a *Deity*, and the *Beginning of the World*, as to have made it matter of *Question*, whether the *Godhead* and the *Creation* are indeed

* Περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων ἱκανὸν ἐστὶ τὸ τοσοῦτον ἀκριβὲς ὅσον ἐπιζητεῖν καθ' ἕκαστον γένος, ἐφ' ὅσον ἡ τῆς πράγματος φύσις ἐπιδέχεται. Aristot. *Eth. l.* 1. *c.* 3.

deed any other than *Strongly Credible*. And whether that *Opinion* we have been taught to have of them, is really any other than *highly Probable*. And whether (by conſequence unavoidable) we are not void of *All Knowledge* concerning God, however *confident* we have been, that a God there is.

§ 6. To this Objection I anſwer by Theſe Degrees. Firſt, I ſay, that the *Objectors* do either very much *miſtake* ſome very learned men's *Words*, or that the learned men's *Words* are not *expreſſive* of their *meaning*. For how unfortunately ſoever ſome of excellent Erudition may have managed ſome Parts of their moſt excellent Deſign, by an *ill choice* of ſome *Similitudes*, and by the *wording* of their Intentions; ſure I am that their *Judgements* are *ſound* and *orthodox* as to the *Deity*, and withall as to the *Evidence* it carries with it. They do not any where deny that the *Godhead is demonſtrable*; but ſay it is not a proper Subject of *Mathematical* Demonſtration. Nor ſay they any where preciſely, *The Godhead cannot be prov'd by ſenſe*; but onely that it cannot be ſo *immediately*. And in ſuch ſayings as Theſe, there is no Harm. For

§ 7. Not to inſiſt (at this Time) on That *Divine*

Divine Demonſtration, which is call'd by S. *Paul*, *The Demonſtration of the Spirit*, partly made by Signs and Miracles from without, partly by immediate and ſupernatural Revelations, to all the Prophets of the Old Teſtament, and all the Apoſtles in the New. We have ways of *Demonſtration*, which, though they are not *Mathematical*, are yet as clear, or rather clearer, and *more compulſive* of our *Aſſent*. And *God* may be *proved* even by *Senſe*, *mediantibus Creaturis*, as S. *Paul* ſtrongly argues in his firſt Chapter to the *Romans*. Where *the Inviſible things of God from the Creation of the World* (He ſaith without a Contradiction) *are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal* Power *and* Godhead. *So that they* (who do deny him) *are without all Excuſe*, whether they know him, or know him not. But that They who were *Atheiſts* in point of *Practice*, were *none* at all in point of *Speculation*, the ſame Apoſtle implies by ſaying, *They held the Truth in unrighteouſneſs*. (v. 18.) And *That which may be known of God is manifeſt in them, for God hath ſhew'd it unto them.* (v. 19.) And again, *They did not like to retain God in their Knowledge.* (v. 28.) So very *hard* a thing it is (in the Judgement of our Apoſtle) to be a *ſpeculative Atheiſt*, even for one who deſires 1 Cor. 2. 4.

to be so; and is unwilling to *acknowledge* what he cannot but *Know*.

§ 8. But not to put the least stress upon the Authority of S. *Paul*, which *Antiscripturists* will not allow, (and 'tis for *Their* sakes especially that I am faln on This Subject,) I shall Secondly prove by Reason, touching the *Being of a Deity*, not onely that we are furnish'd with *as much Evidence* of its Truth, as *such a thing is capable of*; but that 'tis *capable* of as much Evidence, as the *light* we *see*, and *see by*, or rather *more*. For as a *mental* Demonstration is more *cogently* convincing to any Skeptick, than an *Ocular*; so That which shews the *Godhead* to us, is of *mental* Demonstrations the *most* convincing. For the *most cogent* Demonstration which can be made by a Logician, is that which argues from the *Cause* to the *Effect*, and is call'd with good reason *Demonstratio Potissima*. But *God* Almighty being the *Fountain* of All things knowable in the World, and so the *Cause* of All *Causes* which are the *Grounds* of *Demonstration*, (the effect of which is true *knowledge*, whose *Ratio formalis*, formal Reason is Assurance,) 'Tis plain his *Being* must carry with it so clear an *Evidence* of it self, that if we were not sure of *That*, we could be sure of *nothing*

nothing elſe. We are *much ſurer* of it, than of any thing we can *ſee*, by how much the *inward* light we have is more infallible than our *outward.* For *This* may eaſily deceive us, and indeed ſo often *does*, that much Experience has taught us to *diſtruſt* our own Eyes in ſeveral Caſes, and in ſome to *disbelieve* them. Whereas a man's *Underſtanding* (of Objects adæquate to it ſelf) can never either *fail* him, or be *ſuſpected*; becauſe 'tis an *Eye* whoſe *Sight is Knowledge.* And *Knowledge* (properly ſo call'd) is ſo *infallible* in its nature, that *without* infallibility it cannot poſſibly be *Knowledge*, but muſt needs be ſomewhat elſe; a ſhrewd *Conjecture*, or ſtrong *Belief*, an obſtinate Confidence, or Preſumption; each of which is true or falſe, as it is well or ill grounded. Whereas to Knowledge as it is Knowledge, *Infallibility* is *eſſential.* Shall I make the Caſe clear, and undeniable by an Example? We know a man having been *blind* from his very Birth, may have as *abſolute* a *knowledge* that 5 and 5 do make 10, as the beſt Ey'd *Lynceus.* And a man the moſt *illiterate* is as far from being able to be *deceiv'd* in this point, as one of the greateſt *Erudition*, or deepeſt *Reach.* Which ſtrongly vindicates our Apoſtle from the poſſible Re-

proach of a Contradiction, when he says, *Things invisible are clearly seen*; and that *Moses saw him who is invisible.* For God's *Existence*, though *invisible* to the *Eye* of the *Body*, is yet to That of the *Soul* most *clearly seen*; even as clearly as the Assertion that 5 and 5 do make 10 is *ascertain'd* to a man *without Eyes or Learning.* Not at all seen by the light *without*, but so much the more by the light *within* him. The Learned and the Illiterate, the Blind and the Quick-sighted, are very equally undeceivable in these Particulars. And therefore when 'tis said by the pert and dull Scoffer, (as pert and dull as the *Japonians* of the *Jenxuan* Hæresie,) * that *He is too foolish who thinks he knows any thing he cannot see*; and *He too credulous, who is able to believe what he cannot reach*; He may be presently made *asham'd* of his *Understanding*, by an argument *ad hominem*, that He is void of all Reason, and can have *no Soul* within him, (much less a *rational*,) because he neither can *see* it, nor can it possibly be *seen.* So 'tis an Argument to the *Scoffer* beyond all Answer, that *nothing* by nature can be *more* excellent than a *Beast*, because a *Beast* cannot *reach* it, or *comprehend* how it should *be.* There have been some in all Ages, whose shamefull Ambition

Rom. 1. 20.

Heb. 11. 27.

* *Sunt qui negant Spiritum esse ullum, aut omnino quicquam præter ea quæ sensu percipimus.* Maffeius *Hist. Ind. p.* 431.

Ambition it has been to make their Ignorance Monumental. *Hercules* by his Pillars, with a *Nihil plus ultra* inſcrib'd upon them, and Mr. *Hobs* by his Hypotheſis, *that there is no Spirit at all*, (nor any thing elſe above the Sphere of his low Capacity,) have but built obelisks to the Memory of their moſt eminent Imperfections, their Incomparable *Pride*, and their Incurable *Stupidity*. The man is fitter to be *deſpis'd*, than to be ſadly *diſputed with*, who takes his *narrow Underſtanding* to be *commenſurate* with the *Univerſe*, and the adequate *Standard of all Exiſtence*; who will have *All* to be but *Fiction*, which is to *Him Incomprehenſible*; and nothing really to *exiſt*, which is above or *beyond* his Soul's *Horizon*. He is worthier of our pity, whoſe perfect ignorance in Aſtronomy makes him ready almoſt to ſwear, *the Sun is no bigger than a Bonfire*; becauſe the *Diſtance* of the *Object*, and the *Deceiptfulneſs* of the *Organ*, do conſpire Both at once to give it a *Littleneſs of Appearance*. 'Tis hard to ſay which is greater, our *uncertainty* of *ſome* things which we do every day ſee; or the *Certainty* of *other* things which cannot poſſibly be ſeen.

§ 9. Now amongſt the many ways of proving a God by Demonſtration, (ſome of which

cannot be made but to good Logicians, and very hardly if at all, in the Engliſh Tongue,) Two eſpecially are the fitteſt for the Capacities of the Vulgar, whilſt *unaſſiſted* by Erudition. The *firſt* of which will be the *eaſier*, though the *ſecond* will be more *cogent*, and more *imperative* of our *Aſſent*.

The *firſt*, and the moſt obvious, is *à Poſteriori*, as proving the *Cauſe* by its *Effects*. Which is as *true* a Demonſtration, and as *prevailing*, as any the *Mathematicks* pretend to; and many times more proportionable to Capacities unimprov'd, than Demonſtration *à Priori*, which proves an effect by its Cauſe or Cauſes. As 'tis many times eaſier to prove the Tree by its Fruit, than the Fruit by its Original, the Tree that bears it. Yea there are things, as the four Elements, whoſe *inward Forms* are *unknown*, and therefore they cannot be demonſtrated to be what they Are, but *à poſteriori*: ſuch as *Fire* by its properties of *heat*, and *light*, and *lightneſs*, and the like; which yet do beget as great a *Certainty* of its *Exiſtence* and Diſpoſition, as could be had if we could know the whole *Eſſence* of it. And thus our common Maſters of Muſick do know the *forces* and the *effects* of all the Muſical *proportions* of *Sound* and

and *Number*, (perhaps to much better purpoſe than either *Froſchius*, or *Gafforel*, or *Boetius* himſelf,) whilſt yet the *Reaſon* of effects is a *Stranger* to them. Now that God is *demonſtrable à Poſteriori*, (I mean as to his *Being*, and his *Nature in Part*, which is moſt eaſily *apprehended*, not as to his *whole Nature*, which is indeed *incomprehenſible*; and the moſt that we know of what it *is*, comes by our knowing what it is *not*;) is very well ſhewn, as by *other* Writers, ſo eſpecially by *Cicero De Naturâ Deorum*, whom 'tis fitter to *refer* to, than to *Tranſlate*, or *Epitomize*. But whoſoever ſhall have the *Patience* (if I may not ſay the *Pleaſure*) ſo to *read*, as to *underſtand* him, will confeſs the whole *World* to be a *Volume* ſo *expreſſive* of its *Creator*, as not to ſtand in any need of that his *leſſer Book*, The Bible, to help it out. For if a man who ſhall but look on a *goodly Palace*, will rather argue that 'twas *built* by ſome skilfull *Architect*, than that the Stones by meer *Chance* (with all the reſt of the Materials) did fall into that *order* wherein he ſees them; much *more*, when we look on the *Sun* and *Moon*, and all the *Harmony* of Things in *Heaven and Earth*, ſhall we conclude them rather the Work of ſome *Inviſible Contriver*, than that they are the Blind off-ſpring

off-ſpring of *Hap* or *Chance*. God is much better known by ſuch *Foot-ſteps* of his *Divinity*, than either an *Hercules* by his *Foot*, or a *Lion* by his *Paw*, or an *Apelles* by his *Pencil*. And as my *Knowledge* that the *Houſe* wherein I am, had a *Builder*, cannot be leſſened by my *Ignorance* of the *Architect* or *Artiſt* by whom 'twas *built*; ſo my *Knowledge* and *Aſſurance* of the whole *World*'s having a *Maker*, (and every way ſuitable to ſuch a *Fabrick*,) cannot poſſibly be *diminiſh'd*, much leſs *diſſolv'd*, or *done away*, by its Maker's being *Inviſible* to *Carnal Eyes*. For how much *ocular* Demonſtrations give place to *mental*, I ſhew'd before. And its Truth is yet farther confirm'd from hence; that Mr. *Hobs* his *Demonſtration* of the *Quadrature of the Circle* (for which he will ſooner dye a Martyr, than for any thing in Religion,) is by a *skilfuller* Mathematician plainly *demonſtrated* to be *Falſe*. But *This* Principle in the Metaphyſicks, [*that of the two Parts of a Contradiction, the one muſt evermore be True, and the other Falſe*,] which is the firſt and chief Ground of all our *Mental Demonſtrations*, (moſt eſpecially of the *Godhead*) and every *Mental Demonſtration* which is duly rais'd from it, or Neceſſitates an Atheiſt either to grant there is a God, or to affirm Both Parts

Parts of a Contradiction, is so clear, and self-evident (without the help of our outward senses) that it is *cogent* even to *all*, of *all* **Persuasions*, and has every where the Suffrage, as well of *Taught*, as of *Untaught* Reason. Insomuch as it cannot be quite so evident, that every *Watch* has a *Spring*, and every *Spring* a *Spring-Maker*, as that there is a [a] *Primus Motor* of every *Mobile* in the World, and a *Principle* of *Being* to All that *is*. The *Proof* of what I have hitherto but *barely said* will be short, and easie. And the Way to it may thus be made.

That some Things there are which *began* to be, *Experience* tells us. And that *Nothing* can be the *Cause* of its *own* Being and Beginning, is just as Plain. For that which is not in *being*, cannot *do* or *act* any thing; and as little is it possible that it should *be* before it *is*. From whence it follows of necessity, that whatsoever *began* to *be*, had its *Being* and *Beginning* from somewhat else. As the *Third* from the *Second*, and the *Second* from the *First*. And because there could be nothing which could begin *before* the *First*, 'tis plain the *First* had its *Beginning* from *That* which *never* did *begin*. And that which *never began* at all, yet is the *Author of Beginning to All* that ever did *begin*, is That

* Rom. 2 14, 15.

[a] Aristot. 7 *Phys. c.* 1. & 8 *Phys. c.* 4. & 12. *Metaphys. c.* 29. *Plato* 10. *de Legibus.*

Confer Bernard. *de Consid. l.* 5. *c.* 6.

which *in Engliſh* we do commonly call *God*. *God* the ſhorteſt and the fitteſt of any Appellative we can uſe *in our Engliſh Tongue*. Not that *This* or *any Name* can ever expreſs his whole *Nature*; (for ſome of the *Greeks* expreſs'd him fitly by τὸ Ἀνεκφώνητον, The *Unexpreſſible*, and *Moſes* more fitly by *I Am That I Am*, or that ſtupendous *Tetragrammaton*, the Lord *Jehovah*,) but as ſafer and leſs improper, than *Anima Mundi*, *Mens Divina*, *Natura Naturans*, and the like, by which the *Peripateticks*, and *Platoniſts*, and from Theſe the *Roſicrucians*, have laid a Stumbling-block in the Way of Themſelves and others.

Now becauſe it does imply the firſt and worſt of *Contradictions*, for *That* Being *not to be*, or *Not* to have been *without* Beginning, which gave a Being *and* Beginning to That which *firſt began to be*; therefore for any one to affirm, *There is no God*, or *no Eternal Cauſe of* Being to All that ever *began to be*, is to affirm Both Parts of a *Contradiction*. Although, in ſpite of Himſelf, and his own Perverſeneſs, (if he is but *an Animal indued with Reaſon*, and not a prodigious ſort of *Monſter in the meer likeneſs of a Man*,) he muſt confeſs the *one* is *True*, and the *other Falſe*. This is a *mental* and *metaphyſical*

physical Demonstration, more compulsively convincing than any *Ocular*. It being Impossible to be True, *that any thing is in* Being, *and Not in* Being *at the same Instant*; as 'tis Impossible to be False, *that every thing* (at the same Instant) *is either in* Being, *or Not in* Being.

These are things of such *self-evidence*, and so *compulsive of Assent*, that (as I said a little before) they have every where the suffrage as well of *taught* as of *untaught* Reason. And This I take to be such a *Proof* or *Demonstration* of *The Deity*, as it is sufficient to convert even an *Acataleptick*, who holds that *nothing is to be known*, but that *a man does know nothing*. Nor does it nakedly *perswade*, but irresistably *compel*, and *constrain* the Atheist. I do not speak onely with *Confidence*, but do *Know* what I say but an *old Experience*.

§ 10. Again, we *know* whom we have believ'd, by some of the *meanest* Creatures acting above the Sphere of their Activity. For all things acting *above themselves*, and with more force or vertue than other things of their Level are *of themselves* able to do, must needs derive such power and virtue from *somewhat else* which is *above* them. As when *Balaam's Ass spake*, and *rebuk'd* her *Rider*, 'twas so *commanding* a

Demonſtration of an Agent *ſupernatural*, working *in*, and *upon*, and *above* the Aſs, that He who will not grant the later, muſt (in ſpite of himſelf) deny the former. Which becauſe an *Antiſcripturiſt* may gladly do, we are to inſtance in other Things, whereof (not his *Reading*, but) his downright *Experience* will beſt convince him. The Caſe may be uſefully repreſented in the vaſt difference which we obſerve between a *Marble*, and a *Loadſtone*. We find the *Marble* has nothing in it above the Nature of a *Stone*. It is as *dull*, as it is *heavy*; and as *unactive*, as it is *lifeleſs*. Whereas the *Loadſtone* acts clearly *above* the nature of a *Stone*, or a Thing *Inanimate*, in drawing *Iron* as it does, an *heavier* Body than Itſelf, and that without a *Touch* or *Contact*, (ſo little need has it of Hands and Arms,) and This by way of *Diſcretion* too, with a *diſcriminating Love* to That Courſe Metal above All others. This, and the other Conſideration, that a *Needle* touch'd with it has a particular Inclination to ſtand full Northward, in which Point onely it is *at reſt*, and ever *reſtleſs* in any *other*, moved *Thales Miliſius*, (the Wiſeſt man in all *Greece*) to believe it *Animate*. And indeed he might have thought it, not onely Animate, but *Senſible*, nor onely Senſible, but *Rational*,

tional, had not his *Knowledge* of a *Deity* (ſhewing his *Wiſedom* in the moſt *ſtupid*, as well as his *Power irreſiſtible* in the *weakeſt* and the *moſt paſſive* of all his Creatures,) ſuperſeded the neceſſity of that Conjecture. To which I add, that nothing *ſpeaks* a God lowder, or more diſtinctly, than ſuch a *ſpeechleſs* ſort of Creatures as *Birds* and *Bees*, whoſe *unlearned* kind of *Science* and skill in *Architecture* or *Tactick*s, the learnedſt Artiſt in the World can onely *imitate*, never *equal*, and would certainly *admire*, if not *adore* too, (as not a few of the Heathens were wont to do,) did not the *Wiſedom* of a *Creator* unty the Knot, and make All eaſy to ſuch as own him. Not to ask *one* of all the Quæres we find in *Job*, (which yet are all argumentative, and plead the Cauſe I have in hand,) who but *God* can teach the *Emmet*, either to *treaſure up* ſtore of *Corn* for a Proviſion in the Winter, or (which is very much ſtranger) to *gnaw off* each little *prolifick* particle of the *Grain*, whereby it may keep *without growing*, in the moſt *pregnant* and *fertil Earth*? Shall we ſay ſuch *Thaumaturgicks*, as the *Loadſtone*, and the *Bee*, the *Emmet*, and the *Silkworm*, are all αὐτοδίδακτοι, or *Self-Inſtructers*, in the exerciſe of the *Arts* and *Curioſities* they exert? If not ſo, it muſt

Job 38. 39, 40, 41.

be Thus; that acting All, as they do, *above* the Sphere of their Activity, and *beyond* the low Rank they are placed in, they are clearly, Θεοδίδακτοι, All *taught of God.* For where there is *Art without Knowledge*, eminent *Skill without Learning*, unerring *Sight without Eyes or Vision*, incomparable *Providence without all Forecast*, wonderfull *Wisedom and Contrivance* without the inherence and use of Reason, (as in the *Bee*, the *Loadstone*, the *Emmet*, and the *Silkworm*,) There we have a *Demonstration* of a Superiour, Invisible, Supernatural Agent, working *in*, and *upon*, and *above* the Creatures, as 'twere on purpose to convince us, *that he is God.* And truly till we are able to give a tolerable reason, (from Art, or Nature,) why some dull and dead *Specificks* do work with *Discretion*, and out of *Choice*, upon a *determinate* Part or Humor in the Body of man, and lets the rest all *alone*, (as 'twere by a *wilfull Preterition*,) as why *Rhubard* purges *Choler*, *Hellebore Melancholy*, *Senna Flegm*, *Hermodactyls Viscosity*; or why *Cantharides* are offensive in particular to the *Kidneys*, *Mercury* to the *Throat*, *Strammoneum* to the *Brain*, *Opium* to the *Nerves* throughout the whole Body; I say, till we are able to give Another Cause or Reason of These astonishing

ing Effects, I ſhall conclude that Theſe Things have Theſe Diſcretions onely from *God*; and that the *Phyſicians* were *Enthuſiaſts*, to whom Theſe Secrets were firſt reveal'd.

§ 11. To ſumm up all in a word, (and to diſmiſs the firſt Method of demonſtrating the *Cauſe* of all other Cauſes by his *Effects*;) from that virtue in the Hen which is derived to the Egge, and is the Principle of Eſſence to the *yet unform'd* Chicken, whilſt it is *not a Spirit*, and yet *Inviſible*, our excellent *Harvey* ſtrongly argues the ſtrict *Neceſſity* of a *God*, for whom alone it is not difficult to *create* out of Nothing the Things that *Are*. And in the ſame Book *de Generatione*, (to the reading of which 'twill be ſufficient to referr our modern Doaters upon *Experiment*,) he ſays, *Generatio Demonſtrat Spiritum, eumque Deum.* He means a logical Demonſtration *à poſteriori*; ſuch as is That of an *Artificer* from any *Artifice* he exerts. Which does carry along with it ſo clear an Evidence of its Author, that a *Watchmaker* is ſaid to *move* the *Watch* which he has *made*, at the greateſt *diſtance:* in as much as with his *Hands* and *other Inſtruments* of working, (as truly *informed* by his *Hands*, as his *Hands* by his *Head*, and his *Head* by his *Intelligence*, and his *Intelligence* by

by the *Fountain* of its *Existence*,) he gave his Watch as well the *Laws*, as the *Necessity* of its Motion.

§ 12. The Second general Method of *Demonstrating* the Object and Ground of Worship, whereby we *Know* whom we believe, (as to his *Entity* or *Existence*, and as to *part* of his *Nature* too,) is like to That which God made to demonstrate the *Being* of the *Sun*. For as the Sun is best seen by the *light* it gives us, and even *obtrudes* upon our *Senses*, without the least aid from either the Mathematicks, or Logick, or from the Metaphysicks, or Physicks; so *God himself*, as to his *Being*, (though not as to all his *Mysterious Essence*,) is most clearly *apprehended*, and *unavoidably understood*, (without any assistance either from Art, or Education,) by the *ordinary *Light* and *Law of Nature*. Man's *knowledge* of a *Godhead* has been ever just as *natural*, as his knowledge that he has *Eyes*, (without the help of a Reflexion from any Looking-glass whatsoever,) though he cannot either *see* them, or make them able to *see themselves*, unless it be by *Reflexion*, which yet does not *make*, but onely *illustrate* and *prove his knowledge*. Hence it is that *All* Nations, in *All* Times and Places, whether *Salvage*, or *Civiliz'd*,

* Justin. *in Resp. ad Quæst.* 1. Damascenus 1. *fid. Orth. c.* 1. *&* 3. Cic. *Orat. pro* Milone.

Civiliz'd, however tempted by the Devil to *love* and *cherish Dissentions*, and especially to affect a *Singularity* in Opinions, Though they have evermore *differ'd* in most things else, and even in the *choice* of the *Gods* they Worship'd; yet that a *Deity* there *is*, They have not been able but to *agree*. Τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι, *solus est Sermo universalis*. That there is *above Nature* a Divine Object of Worship and Adoration, is the one language of all the World: The onely *Universal Character*, stamp'd in every man's Heart and Head, who is perfectly a *Man*, and not a *Monster*; as *He* must needs be a *Monster*, who has *no Reason*; and much more He, who has *no Religion*. Thus is *one single* Error the Confutation of *Another*. The Sin and Error of *Idolatry* does refell the Worse Error and Sin of *Atheism*. It's observable of the *Athenians*, (in the Times of S. *Paul*,) that knowing nothing of the *True God*, but that a *True God there is*; and Knowing withall they *knew him not*, as to the *Perfections* of his *Nature*; erected an Altar with This Inscription, ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *To the Unknown God*. Two things I here mark to my present purpose. First, that the *God* whom they *knew not*, and yet *ador'd*, was indeed the *True God*, even *the same that* S. *Paul had declared*

Nulla Gens tam barbara, quæ non fateatur esse aliquem Deum. Cic. 1. *Tuscul. Qu.* πάντες περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν. Aristot. 1. *de Cœlo* t. 22. *V.* Jamblicum *in pr. de Myst. Ægypt. &* Julianum *apud* Cyrill. *l.* 2.

Act. 17. 23.

clared to them. Next that the God whom they *knew not*, and *could not know*, as to his *Eſſence*, They had a *True knowledge of*, and *could not but know*, as to his *Being*. Which is evinced and preſuppoſed and inferred even from hence, that they did ſeriouſly, and zealouſly, though *blindly worſhip* him. All which as an *Hiſtorian*, (rather than as a Preacher,) and as a *matter of Fact* our Apoſtle told them.

§ 13. From hence it follows that *Thoſe Athenians* who were the Anceſtors of *Theſe*, did ſhew themſelves to be a *wiſe* and *religious* People, in that they offer'd by Proclamation a Talent of Silver for a Reward, to any Perſon who ſhould be ſo happy and ſuch a Lover of Religion, as to kill the foul Monſter, *Diagoras the Atheiſt*, newly fled out of *Attica* for fear of Juſtice. Nor had they onely ſuch an hatred of a *poſitive Atheiſt*, whoſe profeſſion of Atheiſm gave him *Atheos*, for his *Name*; but they were as much admired for their Piety and Prudence, in that they *baniſhed Protagoras*, and *burn'd* his *Books*, and this for no other reaſon than that he *clanculary* worſhip'd, and writ but *doubtfully* of a *Deity*; as if it were a *moot point*, whether there were any ſuch thing, or no. For

Διαγόρας ὁ κληθεὶς Ἄθεος, διὰ-βολῆς τυχὼν ἐπ' ἀσεβείᾳ, ἔφυγεν ἐκ τῆς Ἀττικῆς. οἱ δ' Ἀθηναῖοι τὸ ἀνελόντι Διαγόραν ἀργύρεια τάλαντον ἐπεκήρυξαν. Diodor. Sic. l. 13. p. 137.

For to be *doubtfull* of a Deity, (and not to say *I know* whom I have believ'd,) I do suppose to be the utmost that the *Affecters of Atheism* have been able to arrive at by all their Arts; whether tending to *extinguish the natural light* of the Understanding, or to the making of the *Conscience* so *tough* and *callous* by vitious habits of Debauch, as to justifie and commend S. *Paul*'s expression of the Thing, when he saith, that *some Consciences* are *cauteriz'd*; they are so *sear'd with an hot Iron*, as to become quite *insensate*, and *past all feeling*. I say, the thing we call *Atheism* I conceive to be no more than a meer *Doubting of a Deity*; not at all a presumption that 'tis *impossible* for it to be. For *Protagoras Himself*, and the *Magicians* who had debauch'd him, (brought by *Xerxes* into *Greece*,) did *privately* offer Sacrifice to certain Gods whom they ador'd, however they were in publick *too brave* to *own* it, because they *scorn'd* to have it thought by their *dull Admirers*, that any *Deity* did assist them in whatsoever they could do above other men. Now this *Doubting* of a Deity, implying a Deity to be *Possible*, (and that for any thing they know, it either *may*, or *may* not be,) does accidentally *demonstrate* that a *Deity* there *is*, and that it cannot

but be. For seeing to *doubt* it, is to *acknowledge* that it is *Possible* for it to be, (though not that it is actual,) and seeing the *Sense* of the *word* Deity is a *Necessary Being*, altogether independent and antecedent to all Causality, (which an Atheist will grant It *must* be, if *'tis at all*,) it does imply a *contradiction*, to *grant* that it is *Possible*, and yet to *deny* that it is *Actual*; because to be *Possible*, but yet *not Actual*, is to be perfectly *contingent*; which for a *Deity* to be, and yet be a *Necessary Being*, is a most gross *Contradiction in Adjecto*. And a gross *Contradiction* being the *onely* way of proving any *absolute Impossibility*, is therefore *one* way of proving the *Actual Being* of a *God*, upon a naked confession that 'tis but *Possible* for it to *be*. Which confession any *Atheist* will much rather make, than undertake the harder Task, of proving a *Godhead* to be *impossible*. And yet 'tis That he *must* do, or else be convinced there *is* a God, by his previous Conviction that one there *may* be.

§ 14. The Atheist's *Sanctuary* and *Refuge*, to which he makes his last flight from the *Necessity* of a *Godhead*, (as the *Fountain* of *Existence* to all good things which *began* to *be*,) is *an æternal Succession of Individuals*. Which, how-

however he cannot *prove*, or *perform* any thing *like* it, he is resolv'd to take for granted, to superſede (if it were possible) the *strict Necessity* of a *Creator*. But This objection has been so baffl'd, and put so quite out of all Countenance, by *Paulus Venetus*, and *others*, whose Argument leads it clearly to This *Absurdity* which it incurs, that *a Part must of necessity be equal to the whole* upon that *Hypothesis*; that I shall say no more of it than briefly This. That on the supposal of an *eternal Succession of Days*, there must be a *Medium Metaphysicum* between the *Two Eviternities*, the one *before*, the other *after* every *Noon*; because the Noon of *this* day, (or of *yesterday*, or of the *morrow*,) cannot be *more* or *less* distant from that which *never* did *begin*, than from That which shall *never end*. Which infers an *Æquidistance* (in a *negative* way of Speaking) 'twixt *two Durations æviternal*, though not (in a *positive*) 'twixt *two Extremes*.

But I add, that the *Objection* confutes *it self*; in that the *Succession* of *Individuals*, by the way of *Generation* in which we find it, affords a controuling *Demonstration* of its Æternity's being *Impossible*; and does not need any such *subtilty*, as is required in the management of

* Amongst and above others, I mean the most acute and the most learned Dr. *Gunning*, now my Lord Bishop of *Ely*, *Paulus Venetus* and others, Mr. *Latham* in his Sermon upon *Rom.* 1. 20. P. 3, 4, 5.

the Argument foregoing. For, (to inſtance in the Succeſſion of the *Hen* and the *Egg*,) we cannot ſay that the *Hen* did *lay* the *Egg*, and that the *Egg* was *hatched* into the *Hen*, and ſo backwards to all *Æternity*; becauſe the *Hen* (as a Parent) is by nature *before* the *Egg*; the former being the *Cauſe*, whereof the later is the *Effect*. From whence 'tis evident, that there was *a Firſt Hen*; which being abſolutely *impoſſible* to have been by *Generation*, it cannot but be, that it was *created*. And That which did *create* it, muſt needs be *God*.

§ 15. Having thus far proceeded in ſolving the *firſt* of the three Quæres, *How, and Why we are ſaid to Know God, even as perfectly and as plainly as any thing Knowable can be Known*; I cannot chooſe but charge the *Atheiſt* with arrant *Dulneſs* and *Stupidity*, (however he may paſs for a Man of *great Wit*, with ſuch as having *none at all* are unfit to judge of it,) for being able to make a *Doubt* in ſo clear a Caſe. Whereby he may ſeem to have *too much*, and *too little* Subtilty; becauſe if he had *leſs*, he would not *ſtart* any Objections againſt his Maker; and if he had *more*, he would be able to *refute* them. But becauſe, though we do *Know* whom we have believed, we do alſo *Believe* whom

whom we truly *Know*, it remains that I proceed to the *Second* Quære which I propos'd; How and Why our bare *Believing* the *hidden things* of our God (however in the Scriptures revealed to us) is much more *proper*, and more *requir'd*, and more *rewardable* in Religion, than our *clear* and full *Knowledge* of his *Exiſtence.*

§ 16. In order to the reſolving of This *Second Quære*, I muſt *diſtinguiſh* more fully than in my Anſwer to the Firſt, betwixt the *Myſteries* in Religion, or its Subject *in Hypotheſi*, and what *in Theſi* is the *Ground* and the *Object* of it. There are matters in *Religion*, as well as *Nature*, which are moſt worthy of our *Belief*, though much above the flight of our *Comprehenſion.* And though evidently *credible*, are not *evidently* True, how *True* ſoever in *Themſelves.* They have *evidence* enough to require our *Faith*, though not enough to beget our *Knowledge.* Thus the *Trinity in Unity* is as evident *in it ſelf*, as the *Godhead* is; but *not* ſo evident unto *us.* And humane *Faith* may be ſo *ſtrong*, as to exclude from the *Agent* all kind of *doubting*; though not from *All Objects* a *Poſſibility* that they are *falſe.* For nothing can exclude This, but *Knowledge properly ſo call'd*, to which a *Certainty*,

tainty is as essential, as *Credibility* is to *Faith*. And the absolute *impossibility* that the *Mysteries* of God should admit of *falshood*, ariseth onely from the *Verity* and *Veracity* of the *Godhead*, not from the *steadiness*, or the *strength*, much less from the *Nature* of our *Belief*. But there are *other* things in Religion, which, though they are not *more True* than the Trinity in Unity, are yet for all that more *Truly Known*. Thus the Evidence I have of *God's Existence*, is so much greater than my Evidence of his being *Three in one*, or the Scriptures being his *Word*; that I am certain of the *former*, because I *know* it; and I *doubt not* of the *later*, because I *stedfastly believe* it. My *Assurance* of the *one* makes me *infallible* in my assent, which I cannot say I am through my *Confidence* of the *other*, unless I have it by a *miraculous* and *immediate Illumination*, as fully as the Apostles their *Gift of Tongues*. Thus the Ground of the Difference of the things spoken of in our Religion, is the Difference of the Ground upon which they stand; to wit, a *greater*, or *lesser Evidence* to our short sighted Souls; not a *greater* or *lesser Truth*, and *Reality* of their *Beings*. For neither our *Knowledge* nor our *Belief* have any influence on the Things we *Believe* or *Know*.

§ 17. This

§ 17. This Distinction being premis'd, I proceed thus to *argue*, and thereby to *answer* the Quære made. Every man's *Understanding* is too too sawcy with his *Will*, in pretending it is its ***Priviledge*** to give a judgement *universally* of *Truth* and *Falshood*, an Error not the less grievous for its having been occasion'd by a very great Truth. For though 'tis the *office* of the *Intellect*, in the Intellect's own *Court*, to pass a verdict upon Things within its *Cognizance*; yet in such *Transcendentals* as are very much *without* and *above* its *verge*, or by a natural Right and Title *beyond* all *humane Comprehension*, a good understanding will confess, It must not *determine*, but *obey*. For to *know* things exactly does onely denominate us *Learned*, but not *Religious:* good *Philosophers* indeed, but not good *Men*. The *word* [Religion] and the *Thing*, being well consider'd, (as 'tis by few, and but seldom,) Its *ratio formalis* will be found, not to stand in proud *Knowledge*, but meek *Obedience*. And in Obedience of the *whole Man*; as well of the *Soul*, as of the *Body*. And in the *Soul* too, we owe an *absolute Obedience* of *all* our Faculties to *God*, of our *Appetites*, our *Wills*, our *Understandings*. *Science* and *Religion* do herein differ more espe-

cially, that in the *firſt* our Underſtandings *direct* the Will; but in the *ſecond* they concur in *ſubmiſſion* with it: in *That* our Reaſon may *command*, as a proud *Dictatrix*; but in *This* ſhe muſt *obey*, as a moſt Teachable *Diſciple*. And for This there is very great reaſon. For 'tis ſo *natural* to *Religion*, to have its *Myſteries*; or Objects *peculiar* to *Faith alone*; that neither the *Greeks* nor the *Barbarians* could ever indure to be *without* them. And if there are few *Mechanick Arts* which have not their *Myſteries* and *Secrets*, unknown to All who are not *Artiſts*; what an *unnatural* thing were it, if
1 Tim. 3. 16. the *Myſtery of Godlineſs*, *God manifeſt in the Fleſh*, or the Religion of the *True God* who is *Incomprehenſible*, ſhould have nothing conteined in it beyond the *fathom* or flight of a *finite reaſon? What man knows the things of a man, ſave the Spirit of man which is in him? even ſo the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* 1 *Cor.* 2. 11. And truly if it were otherwiſe, where were the *Merit*, or the *Myſtery*, or the *Neceſſity* of *Believing*, on which ſo great a ſtreſs in Scripture is every where laid by our Lord Himſelf? We find in our Goſpel theſe two rational Expreſſions, *The Obedience of Faith*, (*Rom.* 16. 26.) and the *Law of Faith*. (*Rom.*

(*Rom.*3.27.) 'Tis the *Obedience* of our *Faith* which is so *pleasing* unto God, as that *without* This it is *impossible for us to please Him.* (*Heb.*11. 6.) If *Faith* it self were not *Obedience* unto That which is called *the Law of Faith*, and to the *Lawgiver* himself who hath *commanded* us to *Believe*, It would not be so *meritorious*, or so *rewardable* in its Nature, as now it *is*. For herein chiefly does consist the excellent Nature of *Religion*, and of all *religious Worship*, (and withall the rationability of the immensity of our *Reward*,) that 'tis attended with *Self-denial*, and a *Resignedness* of the All that is most excellent in our Souls, unto the *Will* of that *Object* we thus *adore*. Whereas if we absolutely *Knew* whatsoever by our *Religion* we are obliged to *Acknowledge*, or were we obliged to acknowledge what we *see* or *feel* onely; there could not be possibly such a Thing as *real Virtue* in our *Assent*, when 'twould be *impossible not to assent* to what we should distinctly *Know*, and as *impossible not to acknowledge* what with our brutish and common Senses we *see*, or *feel*. Necessity and Vertue are incompatible in All, but in *God Himself*. And even in *Him* (speaking ἀνθρωποπαθῶς) they *differ* too. Our *Knowledge* indeed may be call'd a *Physical*, but not a *religious*, or

moral Virtue. There are Virtues indeed which do *lead* to Knowledge; and Knowledge (truly so call'd) does *dispose* to Virtues. But naked *Science* is a meer *Intellectual Habit*, (wherein the Devils themselves excel,) and was never yet reckon'd an *Ethick* Virtue. The reason of all which is plain, and obvious. For the *Object* of a Man's *Knowledge* does *compel* his assent; whereas the *Object* of his Faith does but *invite* it. To matters of *Faith* our *Assent* is *due*; but to matters of K*nowledge* 'tis *unavoidable*. Our K*nowledge* shews onely we are *intelligent* in our nature; but our *Faith* shews in us also the Grace of *Meekness*. That indeed infers the *Conspicuity* of the *Object*; but This (which is *more*) the *Flexibility* of the *Will*. (To sum up the difference in a word,) by light of *knowledge* it appears that we are a reasoning sort of Creatures; but by the Obedience of our *Faith*, that we are *Religious* ones.

§ 18. From these Premises I infer, we ought not to trouble our selves at all, that we *cannot* fully *Know*, so far forth as we *can* B*elieve*. For God has *given* us *Knowledge enough* (if we live not up to it) to *greaten* our future *Condemnation*; and the *knowledge* which He *denies* us is not *necessary* at all to our *future safety*. And seeing

seeing 'tis one of *God's Attributes*, to be by Nature *Incomprehensible*, (who were he not so, could not be God,) 'Tis fit the *learnedst* of his Creatures should be contentedly *in the Dark*, as to many things; the firm *Belief* of which things they stick not to *testifie* with their *Blood*. If we believe the *Will* of God to be revealed in his *Word*, and therein the *Three Subsistences* in but *one* and the *same Substance*, we may not be *vext* with the *Experience*, of our being yet *unqualify'd* to *comprehend* how it should be. For whatsoever things they are we are commanded *but to Believe*, it cannot possibly be a *Sin*, not to be able to *know exactly*. But 'tis a **Sin* to be *disquieted*, that the *sublimest* Things of God do *exceed* our *Reach*; and that whilst we are *finite*, *Infinite* Things will be *above* us. To *comprehend* what is *finite*, a finite Intellect is sufficient; and as sufficient also it is, to *Apprehend* what is *Infinite*, though not at all to *comprehend* it; (so great and wide the difference is between an *Apprehensive* and a *Comprehensive* knowledge; but an *Adæquate* knowledge of *God*, is onely competent to *God*. As for *Certainty* and *Knowledge*, God has wisely dealt to us such fit Proportions, that we have Ground enough given us in God's own Word, to want with *comfort* what we *have not*;

**Vix sibi temperant, quin eousque impudentiæ provehantur, ut Naturam oderint quòd infra Deum simus.* Sen. *de* Benef. *l.* 3. 29.

not; and to injoy what we *have*, with *Moderation*. 'Tis *there* we are assured of a threefold πληροφορία, or *Full assurance*. A *Full assurance of Faith*, (*Heb.*10.22.) A *Full assurance of Hope*, (*Heb.*6.11.) A *Full assurance of Understanding*, (*Col.*2.2.) The last imports a full *Knowledge* of wnat is *Knowable* in God, and *fit* or *good* for us to *Know*; which leads us on to an **Acknowledgement* of the *Mysteries of God, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisedom and Knowledge*. And this does prompt me to observe S. *Paul's Distinction*, between τὰ γνωστὰ, and τὰ ἀπόκρυφα τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the Things of God which may be known*, (*Rom.*1.19.) and the other Things of God which are *Hidden* from us. (*Col.* 2.3.) As for God's *Existence from everlasting to everlasting*, his *omnipresence*, his *omnipotence*, his *all-sufficience*, and his *omniscience*, his *Truth*, and *Justice*, his *Love*, and *Goodness*, and the like; in respect of all These, we perfectly *Know* whom we Believe. We have (literally speaking) a *Full assurance of Understanding*. But for the *Trinity of Persons*, the *Incarnation of God the Son*, his *Circumcision*, his *Crucifixion*, his *Satisfaction for all our Sins*, the *Resurrection of our Bodies*, and *Immortality of our Souls*; in respect of all These, we rather *Believe* whom we have known.

* ibid.

known. We have in These a *Full assurance* of *Faith*, and *Hope* onely. And the *perfection* of our *knowing* the things of God *which may be known*, is Ground enough for our B*elieving* the things of God which are *Hidden* from us.

Επιστήμη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐξ ὧν ὑπόδοσιν εἰς ἃ μὴ ὑπόδοσιν. Clem. Alex. *Strom. lib. 2.*

§ 19. Of what has hitherto been said, *Two* good *Uses* may here be made. The one of *Confutation*, the other of *Comfort*. *That* belongs to Those men who are *affectedly Unbelievers*; *This* will redound unto *our selves*, when in meer humane *frailty* we sometimes *waver*. And B*oth together* will be an *Answer* to the *Third Quære* which I propos'd, touching *the Powers*, and *the Effects*, and *the great* B*enefits of* B*elieving*, (as well as of *knowing* whom we believe,) clearly implied in the Text by the Causal *For*, as That imports S. *Paul's Reason*, why he was not asham'd of the things he suffer'd. *For this Cause* (says He to *Timothy*,) *I suffer these things. But I am not asham'd.* οἶδα γὰρ, *For* I know whom I have believed.

§ 20. First, to the *Wilfull Unbeliever* who does *affect* being *Incredulous*, and casts about for all *Colours* to *nourish* the humour in himself, I shall argue Thus. That He who is so *thick-headed* as to alledge he is not *sure* there is a Life after Death, and a Day of Judgement, must

must needs confess himself so *Dull* too, as not to be *surer* that there is *None*. And 'tis sufficient to oblige a prudent Person to live exactly, (upon the account of Prudence onely,) that a *life after Death*, and so a *Judgment*, if he does not yet fully *know* it, may happen to him *for ought he Knows*. And that *Æternity* of *Punishments* (as well as of *Rewards*) is barely *Possible*. And that the *Negative* is not *Demonstrable*, any more than the *Affirmative*. Yea, that the *Negative* cannot be possibly, because a *Negative*; but the *Affirmative* (as it is *such*) has a *passive power* at least (which the Negative has *not*) of being the *subject* of *Demonstration*. For thus the *Existence* of a *Deity* may be *demonstrated* by a Person who is of *greater Perspicuity* than the man who *Doubts* of it, though not by Him who is so *stupid*, (and in a manner so *unman'd*,) as to be *able* to make a *Doubt* in so *clear* a Case. Whereas the *Negative* to This, [*that a Deity does not exsist*,] can be demonstrated by *None*, how *acute* soever; nor was ever yet *pretended* to be *Demonstrable* by *Any*. The most *insipid* of *Fools* is able to *say*, [there is no God;] and it can be *but said* by the *wittiest* Atheist. But (to return to That Instance which was of an Article of our *Faith*, and of *Faith alone*, to wit,

wit, *a Punishment Æternal*, or *a Life after Death*, or *a Day of Judgment*;) I say, an *Evil* which is *uncertain*, and by consequence so *contingent*, as that it *may*, or may *not* be, must be provided against in *Policy*, if not in *Conscience*, or *Religion*, by one who would not be a *Fool*, as well as an *Epicure*, or an *Atheist*. A *Lazarus may* be sent out of *Abraham*'s Bosom, (though *de facto* none is,) and a *Dives* out of the Deep too, to certifie *the Truth* of an *Heaven* and *Hell*, upon a supposal that such there *are*. But on a supposal that there are *not*, nor an Existence after Death, 'Tis plain that *None* can be sent to us with a Certificate that there is *None*. From whence 'tis evident that *the Believer* must needs be much on the *safest side*; because the *Object* of his *Belief* is under an evident *Possibility* of Demonstration; whereas the *Contrary* to This is flatly *Impossible* to be prov'd. Besides there is This great Difference too, that if *the Believer* is deceiv'd, he does but lose the *short pleasures* of vitious living; but if the *Incredulous* is deceiv'd, He incurs the *long Torments*, (or rather *endless*, and so *not long*,) which will be one day *the Wages* of it.

§ 21. But in dealing, as I now do, with the *obstinate Skeptick*, or the *affected Unbeliever*,

I onely argue from his own Principles of *carnal Reason*, and *common Sense*. And have spoken onely of Faith as the Child of Fear, which is of the Flesh. Not a word of *That* Faith which is *the Fruit of Spirit*; and is not *acquired*, but *infus'd*; nor the product of *Art*, but a work of *Grace*. The Faith imported in my Text is of a far more sublime and transcendent Nature; and such as carried up S. *Paul* above the low sense of all his Sufferings. 'Tis no less than *the Victory which overcometh the* Heb.11.1. *World*. No less than *the Evidence of Things not seen*; no less than *the Substance* (that is, *the confident Expectation*) *of things hoped for*. It refreiheth our drooping Spirits with unspeakable Comforts in the black and gloomy day of our greatest Trial, when all the Comforters upon Earth are utterly unable to yield us comfort. It fills us inwardly with *Joy in the Holy Ghost*. Conveys unto us a full assurance that our Pardon is seal'd, our Peace ratified, that God is our Father, and we His Children. Gives us some Glimmerings and Fore-tasts of the Glory to be reveal'd. It *presentiates* things *future*; and *prepossesseth* us with the Injoyment of things *invisible*. Reveals unto us, by the secret and powerfull Whispers of God's Spirit, the Beatifick

tifick and glorious *Manſions* prepared for us in *His Houſe*. Hereupon it does ſo place us above the Level of Temptations, as to exempt us from the fear of whatſoever Men or Devils can do unto us. Inſomuch that what is intended by the Enemies of our *Faith* to make us ſorry, by *This* is wonderfully made to increaſe our Joy. By *This* we are enabled *to truſt in God* (as Holy *Job* did) *although he kills us*. So that lifting up our heads, and *looking up unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith*, we learn to *love* and to *kiſs* his *Rod*; and are ſo far from repining at his ſevereſt Diſpenſations, that in regard unto *the Joy that is ſet before us*, we can *injoy* the very *Torments*, and ſcorn the *ſhame* of a Crucifixion. In a word, ſhould I *exemplifie* all I have ſaid concerning *Faith*, by making a Narrative of Particulars, as far as from *Abel* to *Charles the Firſt*, (which were to *prove* by the Argument they call *Induction* the wonderfull *Powers* and *Effects* and glorious *Benefits* of *Believing*, as well as of *Knowing* whom we believe,) I muſt have taken for my Text the *whole Eleventh Chapter of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews*.

§ 22. But becauſe *This* would prove an Enterprize too *long* and *tedious*, though not

too *difficult* to be perform'd; I ſhall conclude with ſome Directions for the *ſecuring* of our *Faith* (if at leaſt we have *any*) from ſlipping from us; and for the enabling us to ſay, with our Apoſtle in my Text, οἶδα μεν ᾧ, we know whom we have *truſted*; *we Know whom we have Believed*; *and are perſwaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him againſt That Day.*

§ 23. If we find our ſelves *wavering* in the *Belief* of thoſe Things whereof we have not a *perfect knowledge*, (however a *perfect knowledge* of *That*, which is the *Ground* of the Things *Believed*, and we have reaſon to *ſuperſtruct* the ſtrongeſt *Belief* to be imagin'd, upon ſo firm a *Foundation* as *perfect Knowledge*,) we may comfort our ſelves, and re-inforce our *Sick Faith*, by obſerving theſe following Rules.

1. Firſt, by reflecting on the importance of thoſe known Words, *Lord I believe, help Thou my unbelief.* Mar. 9. 24. Implying an *unbelief* in *one*, does conſiſt with *belief* in *another* meaſure. Juſt as contrary Qualities often meet in one Subject, in *gradibus remiſſis*, although in *gradibus intenſis* they never can.

2. Next, by making that *Confeſſion* and *Prayer* our *own.* Lord, we *believe* in a degree; but with *fears* now and then, and ſome

ſome diſhonourable *Faintings*. Nor of our ſelves can we do *more*; but That and more by *thy Help*. *Help* us therefore to *believe*, without the leaſt degree of *doubting*, or *diſtruſt*, or *diffidence*. Whatever is *wanting* in our *Belief*, we pray thee *pardon*, and *repair*, and *repleniſh* in us. We cannot acquire it by *Art*, or *Induſtry*; but we can humbly *wreſtle* with thee (as *Jacob* did) for this Bleſſing, by Prayer and Faſting. And through the Grace which Thou haſt given us, *We will never let thee go*, till thou haſt *bleſs'd* us with a *ſteady unſhaken Faith*. Thirdly, by 3.
conſidering, that *to be tempted* (however ſtrongly) is *no Tranſgreſſion*. But rather the *more* a man is tempted, and to the *ſtaggering* of his *Faith*, the more *victorious* is his Faith when he does *not yield*. *Yield* we do not, whilſt we *diſſent* from our *Waverings*; and *hate* the *unſteadineſs* of our Aſſent; and are heartily *griev'd* at its Hæſitations; and are piouſly *carefull* to *make* it ſteady; and *reſolute* in our *Purpoſes* to *hold faſt* our Faith, even in ſpite of thoſe Doubtings we grapple with; and ſtrive to make it ſo much the ſtronger, (the more our Tempter attempts its overthrow,) by the *Antiperiſtaſis* of Temptations. We do not *yield*, though we are *buffeted*, (both by *Satan*, and the *Fleſh*, and

the *World* we live in,) whilſt we are *obſtinate* in our purpoſe to *ſerve* the God whom we own with our *Self-denials*; to *ſerve* him with the *Denial* of all the *Rivals* of his *Religion*; (our Wit, our Reaſon, our Erudition, our Profit, Pleaſure, or Reputation;) and to *honour* him with the *obedience* of *every Faculty* within us; not onely with our *Wills*, but our *Underſtandings*, whilſt we make them *ſtoop down*, when they cannot riſe *ſo high* as to things above us; and the * *rather* to *believe* them, (if I may uſe *Tertullian*'s ὑπὲρ,) becauſe *Impoſſible*. For what is *impoſſible* to *us*, to *God* is *eaſie*. What to *us* is *miraculous*, to *Him* is *natural*. And therefore the *Myſteries* of our Religion, (to wit, the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Reſurrection*, and the like,) which to the *miſty* Eye of *Reaſon* our Tempter would make to ſeem *impoſſible*, do to the *clearer* Eye of *Faith* appear to be *True* ſo much the *rather*. I ſay, the *rather* in two reſpects; in reſpect of our *Tempter*, whoſe ends we *fruſtrate* by our Belief; and in reſpect of the *Things Themſelves*, which do the better *become Religion* for being *above* the ſhort Reach of our *ſtunted Knowledge*; and which we are *Therefore* to *believe*, becauſe *unable* to *comprehend* them. For were we able to *comprehend* them (as we do many

* *Mortuus eſt Dei Filius, prorſus credibile eſt, quia ineptum. Sepultus reſurrexit, certum eſt, quia Impoſſibile.* Tert. *de Carne Chriſti.*

many things *below* us,) This grois Abſurdity would follow, that what is now our *Religion*, would be our *Science*. Wherein our *finite Underſtandings* would not humbly *ſubmit*, but proudly *Triumph*. And it would be an *hard* thing to be *Irreligious*. The *Pelagians* of *old*, and our *late Socinians*, do ſeem to *forget* the vaſt *Diſtance*, and *Diſproportion*, betwixt the *Faculties* of *Man*, and *hidden Myſteries* of *God*, when they contend for a *Sufficience* in *natural reaſon* to **receive* the *deep *things of the Spirit of God*. For as *God* being a *Spirit* muſt (for that very reaſon) be *worſhipped in* Spirit, ſo the *ſpiritual* things of God muſt be *ſpiritually* diſcerned. There muſt be [a] *Similitude* and *Proportion* 'twixt *Acts* and *Objects*. Laſtly, 'tis matter of *comfort* to us, and one of the means of *reinforcing* our *wavering Faith*, that what does often ſeem to *fail* us in *one* regard, may yet in *another* be ever with us *for* our *ſupport*. We may with *the Father of the Faithfull*, the Faithfull *Abraham*, [b] *believe in Hope againſt Hope*. For as *He* could *not hope* for a great Poſterity, in regard of His *Age*, and *Sarah*'s *Barrenneſs*, which yet he could not *but hope for*, in regard of God's *Promiſe*, which could not *fail*; ſo, what we *cannot believe* exactly, in regard of its being

* 1 Cor. 10. 14.

a 1 Joh. 3. 2.

b Rom. 4. 18.

being above the Reach of our *Reaſon*, and common *Uſages* of *Nature*; we cannot chuſe *but believe*, in regard that *God ſays* it who *cannot lie*. The *Worthineſs* of our *Faith* does ſtand in This chiefly, that though 'tis many times *Wavering*, like the tremulous Needle in the Mariner's Compaſs, yet being *touch'd* by God's *Grace*, as That *Needle* by the *Loadſtone*, its *prevalent* motion is towards its *Pole*; and from *That* its Trepidations can never *wreſt* it. Inſomuch that we may ſay, (as once S. *Paul* in another caſe,) *we are troubled on every ſide, yet not in Diſtreſs*; *perplex'd we are* often, *but not in Deſpair*; *Perſecuted* by Satan, but by God *not forſaken*; *caſt down* indeed, *but not deſtroy'd*. Tremble we may, (like *Ariſtippus* in a ſhipwrack,) but (like Him) we are not guilty of yielding up our Συγκατάθεσις, (as 'tis worded by *Aulus Gellius*.) We do not baſely *conſent* to our Perturbations, which ariſe not from our *Spirits*, but from our *Fleſh*. The *Law in our Members* (do what we can) will ſtill be *warring*; but *the Law in our Minds* does ever *worſt* it. We ſtill *believe* with our *Wills*; Lord, help the *Unbelief* of our *Underſtandings*. Our *Hearts* are ſteady; Lord, fix

2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.

fix our *Heads* too. In ſpite of our very *Unbelief* (in point of *doubt*, or *hæſitation*, or now and then a *dark interval*,) We *will* believe, ſo as to *love* the *Incarnate Deity* whom we admire; and *ſo love*, as to *obey* him; and *obey* him to ſuch a point, as *to lay down our lives* for the love we bear him. And ſo will prove by *all three*, that we do really *Believe* what we cannot fathom, [*God manifeſt in the Fleſh*,] becauſe *without* our Believing, we can do *neither*. Neither Love, nor Obey, nor lay down our Lives in obedience to him. Let our *Doubtings* or *Disbelievings* (in ſome Degree, and by Fits,) be what they *can*; or let them *ſeem* to be what they *will*; yet we are *certain* of our *Faith*, whilſt we are certain of our *Fear* to *offend* our Maker; and of our *Love* to his *Goodneſs*, and of our *Obedience* to his *Commands*. Without this laſt ('tis very true) we cannot ſpeak Peace to *our ſelves*, or *others*. For as S. *John* ſays expreſly, *By This we know that we know him*, *if we keep his Commandments*; ſo 'tis *the keeping of his Commandments*, by which we *know* that we *love*, and *obey* him *truly*.

§ 24. Now having arrived at a *full know-*

Est non scripta sed nata lex; quam non didicimus, accepimus, legimus, verùm ex Naturâ ipsâ arripuimus, hausimus, expressimus; ad quam non docti, sed facti; non instituti, sed imbuti sumus, &c. Cic. *Orat. pro* Milone.

ledge of God's *Existence*, and his *good-pleasure*, (expressed to us in his *Precepts*,) or of his *Verity* and his *Will*, (revealed to us in his *Word*, and also ingraven in our own *Nature*, as a *Law* written in our *Hearts*;) and farther yet having attained unto a *knowledge also in part* of his Glorious *Essence*; (as that he is a *Spirit*, *Existing of Himself from all Eternity*, an *omnipresent* and an *omniscient*, and a *necessary Being*, *from whom*, and *by whom*, *is every Good Thing that is*; and that he is *a Rewarder of Them that diligently seek him*; &c.) Having I say the satisfaction of *knowing* That which our Apostle does call τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *That which may be known of God*, which is as much as is *needfull*, and as much as is *enough*; we must not disquiet our Minds in vain, by **seeking out things which are too hard for us*, or by *searching after Secrets above our strength*; or by being *over-curious in unnecessary matters*; as the excellent Son of *Sirach* has very judiciously forewarn'd us. *The Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead* is the chiefest of Those Insearchables, which are indeed ἀνεξιχνίαστα, *past finding out*, more *impossible to be traced* than all his most mysterious *ways*, which

Heb. 11.6.

Rom. 1.19.

* Ecclus. 3. 21, 22.

Rom. 11.33.

which our Apoſtle thought worthy of *That Expreſſion.* Such a myſtery it is, as the moſt pious, and the moſt learned, and moſt acute of all Writers were never well able to give account of. The moſt profound Divine *Here* is in the condition of *Simonides*, when demanded by *Hiero*, a definition of the Deity. The more he *looks* into This Myſtery, by ſo much the *obſcurer* it ſeems to be. The longer he conſiders, the *leſs* he is able to apprehend it. S. *John* ſays expreſly, (and I believe him,) *There are Three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, the Holy Ghoſt, and Theſe Three are One.* (1 *Joh.* 5. 7.) The Antient Fathers and Councils, to ſtop the Mouths of ſeveral *Hereticks*, of Two eſpecially, *Arius* firſt, and then *Sabellius*, and to preſerve the Chriſtian Church from the Plague of *Schiſm*, found it neceſſary to add This Form of Words, (though not in a *poſitive*, but in an *excluſive* ſenſe,) *A Trinity of Perſons in an unity of the Godhead.* But if 'tis * asked what is meant by a *Trinity of Perſons*, S. *Auſtin* ſays we want words to expreſs it by. *Dictum eſt tamen Tres Perſonæ, non ut illud diceretur, ſed ne taceretur quomodo Tres ſint, &c.* For who

* *Cùm quæritur, quid Tres? magnâ prorſus inopiâ humanum laborat eloquium* Auguſt. *de Trin l.* 5. *cap.* 19.

can ſpeak fitly of what is *Infinite*, and whilſt he makes uſe of Terms, belonging onely to *finite* Things? yet This muſt be done, if we ſpeak at all. [a] *Il en fault parler en language humain, puiſque le divin nous eſt incogneu.* Onely let us not forget the wiſe Advertiſement of *Anſelm*, (whenſoe're we ſo ſpeak,) * that if we ſpeak concerning God in *Words* which are *Common* to other Natures, our *ſenſe* and *meaning* muſt not be *Common*, but *peculiar to God alone.*

§ 25. Nor is This All. For we want *underſtanding* to *apprehend* the Bleſſed Trinity, as well as *words* to *expreſs* it by. *Anſelm*'s excellent Underſtanding was utterly *loſt* in This *Labyrinth.* The Underſtanding of *Boetius* was alſo *drown'd* in This *Ocean.* Good S. *Bernard*'s Underſtanding was *ſwallow'd up* in This *Abyſs.* From whence I eaſily conclude, (becauſe I do it with humility and due ſubmiſſion,) that *the Trinity in Unity onely can be fathomed by it ſelf.* And that to ſpeak of *Three Perſons*, in any acception of the word *Perſons* which is in uſe amongſt Men, (when at any time they ſpeak of created Beings,) were to commit a groſſer Hæreſie, than that of the *Antitrinitarians.*

§ 26. This

[a] Mornay *de la Verité de la Religion Chriſtienne. c.5.fol 41. b.*

* *Sic eſt ſumma eſſentia ſupra & extra omnem aliam Naturam, ut ſi quando de illa dicitur aliquid verbis quæ Communia ſunt aliis Naturis, ſenſus nullatenus ſit Communis.* Anſel. *Monolog. c. 62.*

Ubi ſupra c. 86.

Boetius *lib. de Trinitate & Unitate Dei.*
D. Bern. *de Conſid. l.5. c.7. p. 897. 878.*

Martialis *in Epiſt. ad* Burdegal. *c. 3.*

§ 26. This does prompt me to *go out of* this long Diſcourſe, at the very ſame Door at which I *enter'd*. A Door of Hope and Conſolation, which ſeems to hang on Theſe three Hinges.

Firſt, that I *know* whom I have believed, by Knowledge properly ſo call'd.

Next, that I *believe* what I *cannot know*, as far as 'tis affirmed in God's own word.

Laſtly, that I *contradict not* what 'tis *moſt difficult to believe*, (becauſe *not written* in God's own word,) as far as I find it is agreed on by *All my Teachers*, (eſpecially met together in *General Councils*,) as an *Act* of *Uniformity*, or as an *Article of Peace*.

For however I *may err*, it ſhall not be as an *Hæretick*, and as a *Schiſmatick* much *leſs*. It being the *Glory* of a Man's *Faith*, to bow down his Reaſon to his Religion; and the *Dignity* of his *Religion*, to ſtudy *Charity*, and *Meekneſs*, and Obedience to his Superiours, above ſome *Truths*. I ſay therefore with [a] *Leo*, *If I cannot explain what the Trinity is, I will not preſume to ſay there is not a Trinity*. And with *Radulphus Flaviacenſis*, [b] If I cannot apprehend how *One is Three* in the propriety of their Perſons, and how the ſame

[a] Leo *de paſſione Domini Serm.* 12.
[b] Rad. Flav. *in Levit. l.* 10. *c.* 2.

Three are One in the Communion of their Substance, I will not despise, or gainsay, but obey the Church. I do not mean onely the *English*, much less the *Roman*, but I mean *the Holy Catholick and Apostolick Church*, in which to believe, is the Ninth Article of my Creed. If this mystery of the *Triune* is as *Ineffable*, as *Inscrutable* by Dust and Ashes, (which we are) I will content my self (with *Damascius*) *to sacrifice to him my Soul in Silence*; and adore him with *Dionysius*, (whether he is the *Areopagite*, or not,) [c] *ut Nomine vacantem*, as being said to be *without*, because *above* every Name. Neither *Jehovah*, in the *singular*, nor *Elohim*, in the *plural*, nor *Both together* conjoyn'd can sufficiently illustrate This stupendous περιχώρησις, (as Divines love to call it,) This *Reciprocal Inhabitation of Three Subsistences in one another*, whereby The *Unity of the Godhead* (is rather *perfected*, than *destroy'd*, and) remains *Intire*.

c Dionys. *Areop. de divin. Nomin. c. 1. p. 447.*

§ 27. 'Tis plain the word *Persons* is to be taken, (not so much in a *Positive*, as) in a *Negative* sense. For that the Words of S. *John* [*These Three are One*] might be no longer *misunderstood* and *misreported*, *misexpoun-*

expounded and *misapply'd*, as they were by ſeveral Hæreticks before the *Firſt Nicene General Council*, And that Chriſtians *every where* might ſpeak as 'twere with *one Mouth*, (in caſe they could not be (*every where*) of *one mind*,) It ſeemed good to [d] *That Council*, to ordain that the Word *Perſons* ſhould be apply'd in Diſcourſe to the *Three Witneſſes in Heaven*, which are but *One God*. Thereby intending, not ſo properly, to give us a *real knowledge* of the Myſtery, as to *defend* us from *Error* in it. And above all other Errors, from thoſe of *Hæreſie*, and *Schiſm*. Not ſo really to inform us what the *Three in One* are, as to preſerve us from Imagining that They *are* what they are *Not*. *Not* three parts in one whole, either Integral, or Eſſential. *Not* three Qualities in one ſubject. *Not* three Modes, *Not* three Formalities, *Not* three Names of one Thing. In which *Act of Uniformity*, (as before I once call'd it,) and eſpecially in reconciling the whole *Greek* Church unto The *Latine*, *Athanaſius* and *Hoſius* were the moſt eminently Inſtrumental. Now in the Buſineſs of *Religion*, (though not in That of meer Philoſophy) we are in all reaſon to yield aſſent to ſome High Things above our reaſon. Elſe

d *Hiſt. Concil. Nicæni ex Edit. Bin. Tom* 1. *p.* 322. *&* Alfonſ. Piſ. *l* 2. *p* 383. *& inferiùs p.* 603. *Vide etiam* Baron *ad Ann.* 362.

Elſe Religion were not Religion ; and God himſelf would not be God, or Man at leaſt would not be Man, and Myſtery would not be Myſtery, if God's knowledge of Himſelf, as a *Trinity in Unity*, could poſſibly be common to Man with God. It is therefore, with Me, a prevalent Argument of His Verity, that His Nature is ſo vaſtly above the Sphere of my Comprehenſion. *Apprehenſive* of his Nature indeed I am; but *comprehenſive* of it I cannot be. For whatſoever I can *fathom*, I cannot abſolutely *Adore* ; as ſeeing there are *few* of my *fellow Creatures*, whoſe Natures I can ſay I do fully *know*. If I make a Man of Wax, or a Statue of Marble, I cannot ſo truly tranſcend my *Creature*, as my *Creator* does *Me* ; becauſe between *Me* and *That*, there is *ſome* proportion ; but between my *God* and *Me*, there is *none at all*. And if my Creature for want of *Reaſon* cannot apprehend *Me*, much leſs for want of an *Omniſcience*, can I comprehend *Him*. Thus though I cannot diſcern the *Reaſon*, why in the *Unity* of the *Subſtance* there is a *Trinity of Subſiſtences* which I admire, yet *why* I cannot diſcern the Reaſon, I can diſcern reaſon enough ; and (which is every whit as well

well for a finite Reaſon,) I find it moſt *reaſonable* that ſo it ſhould be. For exactly to know, why we cannot know exactly the things above us, is every whit as ſufficient in order to our *Faith*, as any kind of *Demonſtration* can be in order unto our *knowledge*. So far is any thing from *reaching* what is infinitely *above* or *beyond* it ſelf, that *no Being* (but the *Divine*) exactly knows *its own Nature*. And even This our very *Ignorance* of God's entire *Eſſence* may lead us to the *knowledge of his Exiſtence*. For as my outward Eye *ſees*, but cannot *See* that it *ſees*, (This later being the Work of a nobler Faculty within me,) or as a Brute does *apprehend* its proper objects, but cannot *apprehend at all How* or *Why* it apprehends, (for want of a power to *reflect* on its Apprehenſion,) ſo a Man indued with reaſon, although he *knows* many things throughly, and alſo knows *how* he knows them, yet *How*, or *Why*, or *by What means* he comes to *know*, that he *knows* Ho he knows, he can never tell; unleſs it be by *inferring*, that it comes to him from a *Superiour* and *Inviſible Power*, which Power is *God's*.

§ 28. By ſtating thus the whole Subje

of the *Godhead* in general, and of the *Trinity* in particular, (which I have ſingled out as one of the higheſt Myſteries in our Religion, the leaſt underſtood, and the moſt ſtumbled at, by ſuch as ſet up meer *Science* againſt *Religion*, and depretiate all *Faith* in reſpect of *Knowledge*,) I pay my Duty both to the *Word*, and the *Church* of God. To each of theſe as a *Chriſtian*; And as a *Man*, to the *Law of Nature*. I fully ſatisfie my *Reaſon*, by weighing the Nature of *Religion:* and ſo I make a ſtrict Agreement between my *Reaſon* and my *Faith*. Nor can I better Conclude and diſmiſs the whole Subject, than in the ſenſe of the devout and acute S. *Bernard*. [e] To *inquire* into This *Myſtery*, (he ſpeaks of a *Critical* Inquiry,) is a *peeviſh Curioſity:* (and as perilous as it is peeviſh.) To *Believe* it in humility, as it is Worded by the Church, (which is the Pillar and Ground of Truth,) is a *Pious Belief*, and a *Safe Profeſſion*. But to *See it as it is*, and to *know it as we are known*, is the final *Conſummation of Bliſs and Glory*.

e Bern. *de Conſideratione l.5.c.8.*

Which *God the Father* of his Mercy diſpoſe us for, for the Merits of *God the Son*, and through

through the powerfull Operation of *God the Holy Ghoſt.*

To whom be Honour and Adoration for evermore.

FINIS.

Neither will the ſuppoſed, (and I fear truly ſuppoſed) greater Number of Atheiſts, than either Papiſts or Sectaries, be any hinderance to the Papiſts, for finally prevailing. See Dr. *Sanderſon*'s long Preface to his Sermons in *fol.* §. 23.

A

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PAg. 85. line 22. r. *Dysasters.*
P. 106. l. 3. from the bottom, for *with* r. *by.*
P. 113. l. 2. r. *Meribibula.*
P. 154. in Marg. after l. 10. add, [*Concil. Florent. Session. 4. & deinceps. Edit. Bin. Vol. 8. à p. 580. ad p. 593.*]
P. 156. l. 6. in Marg. r. *facturam.*
P. 171. l. 19. dele *but.*
P. 207. l. 20. r. *peace.*
P. 214. l. 17. after *but*, del. *the seventh is set apart.*
P. 219. l. 17. for *ye*, r. *the.*
P. 220. l. 10. r. *stamp'd.*
P. 280. l. 3. dele ἵνα ἀξιώσῃ ὁ Θεόν.
P. 283. l. 4. for *whereas*, r. *where, as.*
P. 284. l. 9. r. *Curiosity.*
P. 286. l. 11. after *of*, r. *our.*
P. 295. l. 6. from the bottom, after *are*, r. *we.*
P. 303. l. 17. after *is*, r. *yet.*
P. 312. l. 10. after *Glory*, add in the Text what is in the Margin.
P. 339. l. 8. for *Joshua*, r. *Jeshua.*
P. 352. l. 3. for *so*, r. *see.*
P. 356. l. 9. for *How*, r. *Now.*
P. 386. l. ult. r. *consider.*
P. 400. l. 4. from the bottom, del. *ratio formalis.*
P. 405. l. 3. after *of*, r. *such.*
P. 409. l. 12. after *as*, dele *it.*
P. 410. l. 5. after *are*, r. *therefore.*
P. 419. l. 12, 13, 14. in Marg. del. [*Paulus Venetus, and others.*]
P. 432. l. 5. after *of*, r. *The.*
P. 435. l. 4. after *doubting*, dele *or.*
P. 442. l. 1. dele *and.*
Ibid. l. 6. from the bottom, for *only can*, r. *can only.*